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Shōmonki

The Story of Masakado's Rebellion

A *Monumenta Nipponica* Monograph

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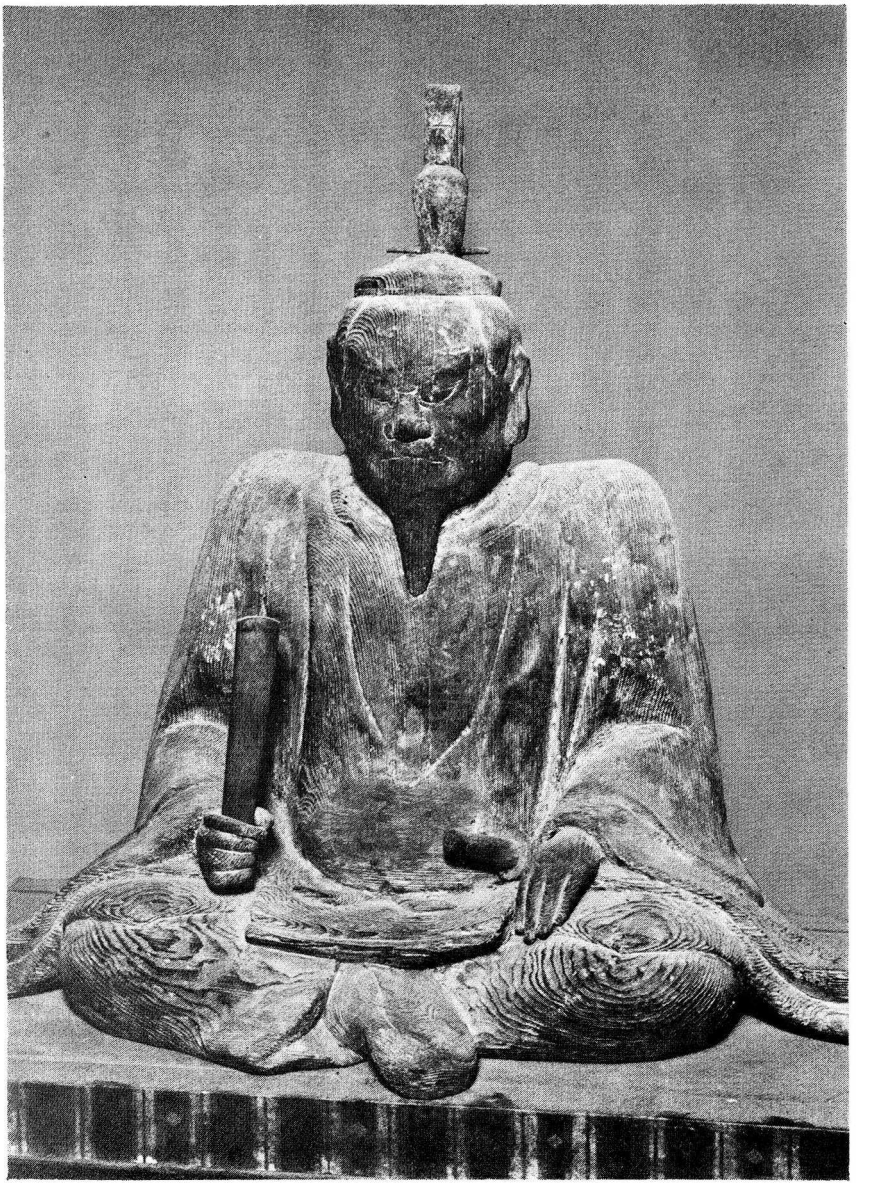

Wooden statue of Masakado, said to have been carved by his daughter in 973. Kokuō Jinja, Iwai.

Shōmonki

The Story of Masakado's Rebellion

Translated and edited
by
Judith N. Rabinovitch

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Sophia University, Tokyo

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Preface

'If you want to learn to read *hentai kambun* [variant Chinese], then why not start with *Shōmonki*?' Following this advice offered to me by my *kambun* teacher, Mr Noburu Hiraga, some eleven years ago, I began to read *Shōmonki*, never imagining at the time that the text would occupy my thoughts for the next decade. I shall always be obliged to Mr Hiraga for the help and encouragement he unstintingly gave me over the years, and feel a deep sense of loss over his untimely death in 1984.

Shōmonki: The Story of Masakado's Rebellion is a revised, abridged version of my doctoral dissertation, completed at Harvard University in 1981. During my graduate school years I was aided and encouraged by many people, and I wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to them. First, my heartfelt thanks go to Professors Edwin A. Cranston and Donald H. Shively, my thesis advisors, whose generous assistance and abiding interest in *Shōmonki* helped to ensure the completion of the dissertation. I am also indebted to Professor Francis W. Cleaves, Harvard University, and Professor William H. McCullough, University of California, Berkeley, for their help in solving various linguistic and historical problems in the text.

While I was doing research in Tokyo during 1979–1980, Professor Kajihara Masaaki, Waseda University, guided my studies and assisted me in locating important resource materials. Without his expert tutelage and friendship, I could not have successfully undertaken this year of study in Japan. Professor Kajihara's excellent *Shōmonki* commentary is a landmark work in the newly developing *Shōmonki* field, and I have made frequent reference to it throughout this book. I have also consulted the *Shōmonki* commentaries of Hayashi Rokurō and Takeuchi Rizō, both of which are listed in the bibliography. A word of thanks is also due to Professor Minegishi Akira, Yokohama National University, who helped me to obtain permission to examine photographs in the archives of Kanda Myōjin, Tokyo, taken during the festivities to commemorate Masakado's restoration as a principal deity of that shrine in 1984.

My husband, Timothy R. Bradstock, helped edit the manuscript and assisted me in the use of Chinese sources. His constant support

was an indispensable factor in the completion of this book, and it is to him that the work is dedicated.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the generous aid provided by The Japan Foundation and the Social Science Research Council, which enabled me to conduct my final research on *Shōmonki* in Japan during 1979–1980. I would also like to thank the College of Humanities at The Ohio State University, Columbus, for a research grant that helped facilitate the revision of my dissertation for publication.

Since completing my translation of *Shōmonki*, I have learned of the existence of another translation by Professor Giuliana Stramigioli, University of Rome, published in 1979 under the title *Masakadoki*. Unfortunately I did not know about this translation and was unable to consult it before submitting my manuscript for publication.

The language of *Shōmonki* is difficult and uneven—sometimes broken, awkward, or barely intelligible—but it possesses a rustic charm that is one of the work's most appealing features. In order to preserve the character of the text, I have refrained as much as possible from smoothing over the rough spots or otherwise improving the literary quality of the narrative. Since this book has been written with the non-specialist reader in mind, I have tried to keep the notes, especially those dealing with linguistic matters and historical terminology, to a minimum. I hope that readers who have a special interest in *Shōmonki* will consult my dissertation for a fuller, more technical treatment of textual problems and complexities.

The so-called 'Masakado boom' of 1976, ushered in by an NHK television serial about his rebellion, produced a large volume of popular commentaries and legendary lore about Masakado and the unsolved mysteries surrounding his life and deeds. My book, like so many others, inevitably raises more questions than it answers, but I hope that it will promote a wider interest in *Shōmonki* and other Japanese war tales, and lead to further research in the field of literature written in *hentai kambun*.

15 January 1985

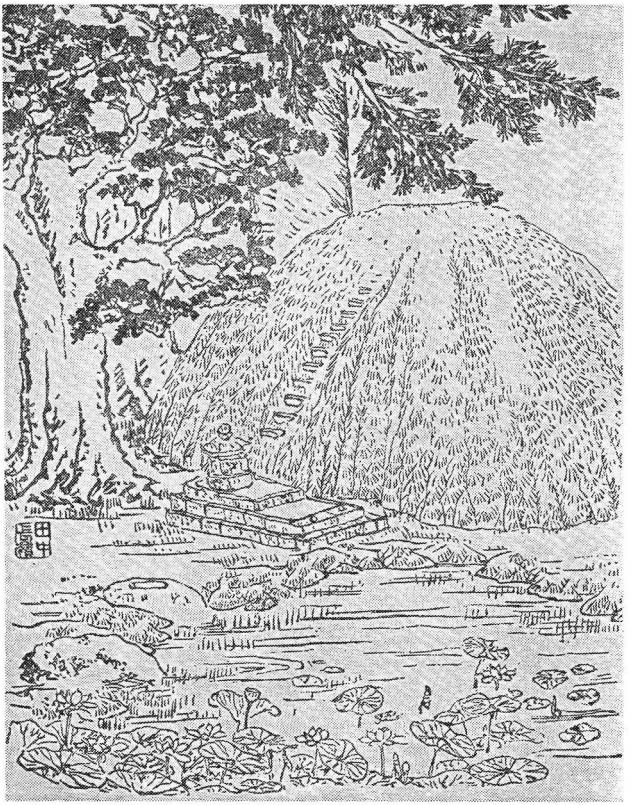
Judith N. Rabinovitch
Yale University

Introduction

On the night of 14 May 1984, Taira no Masakado, d. 940, a deified rebel warrior, was restored to his status as a principal deity of the Kanda Shrine (Kanda Myōjin) in Yushima, Tokyo. The courtly and dignified ceremony was attended by a thousand joyful parishioners wearing the old-fashioned dress of the Edo period, 1603–1868. This seldom-enacted Shinto rite brought to a close a period of 110 years during which the worship of Masakado, formerly a principal deity of Kanda Myōjin, had been relegated to a *massha*, or lesser shrine, within the precincts. This demotion of Masakado's spirit followed the Meiji government's official condemnation of that ancient warrior as 'an enemy of the emperor' in 1874, this act reversing a posthumous official pardon granted to Masakado in 1626.

The 1874 downgrading of Masakado's status was evidently undertaken in preparation for Emperor Meiji's visit to Kanda Myōjin in the same year. A rebel against the imperial state who tried to establish a sovereign kingdom in the eastern provinces of Japan back in the tenth century, Masakado was regarded by the authorities as a dangerous symbol of opposition to the imperial rule being reinstated at that time by the Meiji reformers. Thus Masakado's spirit had to be properly chastised and reduced in status before the newly restored emperor could visit the shrine.

Masakado was first worshipped at Kanda Myōjin in 1309, more than six hundred years after the shrine had been established in the eighth century. Apparently the deification of Masakado was one of a number of attempts made over the centuries to placate his vengeful spirit which was believed to have been the cause of a series of floods, droughts, and epidemics that had ravaged the Kantō region from 1302 to 1305. Viewed as a popular hero, a so-called *yonaoshi* who tried to change the world for the better, Masakado was revered by the local people as the guardian deity of Edo (modern Tokyo) throughout the feudal ages, even during times of official condemnation. It is hardly surprising, then, that parishioners denounced the 1874 downgrading of Masakado's shrine and expressed their displeasure by refusing to attend the annual festival of Kanda Myōjin and by witholding financial contributions to the institution. Masa-



The former Kubizuka, 6 meters high and 27 meters in circumference, destroyed in 1923.

kado's popularity has continued to grow in recent times, and the wishes of the Kanda parishioners that he be restored to his position in the inner sanctum were finally realized when the 1984 ceremony took place.

Popular legends about the renowned Masakado abound. One tells of how he sat atop Mt Hiei to the northeast of Kyoto and plotted rebellion with another rebel, Fujiwara no Sumitomo, d. 941. Another relates how in 940 his decapitated head mysteriously flew eastward in search of its body until it found its final resting place in present-day Ōtemachi in downtown Tokyo. It is now enshrined there at the Kubizuka, or Head Mound, which was carefully maintained in its original form as a large mound until the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923. Today the Kubizuka exists only as a small enclosed plot with a memorial stone and grave marker in

The present-day Kubizuka (Head Mound) in Ōtemachi, Tokyo.

the shadow of the headquarters of the Mitsui Corporation. Prior to Masakado's restoration in 1984, it was rumored that his still unpacified spirit, indignant over the slight inflicted on him by the Meiji government and the leveling of his tomb after the earthquake, made Mitsui the target of his revenge. Masakado's angry spirit was believed to have caused the giant trading company to have suffered various business setbacks in recent years, some of which happened as far away as the Middle East. According to one account, Mitsui employees at company headquarters were even directed at one point not to sit at their desks with their backs to the Kubizuka in order not to provoke the deity any further.[1]

The historical Masakado appears as a shadowy, half-glimpsed figure when compared to his dynamic legendary spirit. The few historical facts that can be pieced together about his life and exploits derive from a rare document titled *Shōmonki*, or The Masakado Chronicle,[2] a partly fictionalized account probably completed in 940, the year of his death. *Shōmonki* is regarded as the earliest

[1] For a brief recounting of the legends concerning Masakado, see Endō Tatsuzō, pp. 45–52. Full details of all works cited or quoted in the notes are provided in the Bibliography, pp. 146–57, below.

[2] The sinitic, or *on*, way of reading the name Masakado is Shōmon; *-ki* means 'chronicle' or 'narrative'. *Shōmonki* can thus be translated as 'The Masakado Chronicle'.

work in the influential and popular genre of *gunkimono*, or war tales, which reached their literary maturity in the fourteenth century.[3] The account narrates in chronological form the last ten years of Masakado's life, focusing on his rebellion in 939–940. This uprising, a unique and sensational event, was regarded as the first challenge to the territorial sovereignty of the Japanese emperor, who resided in the capital, Heian-kyō (modern Kyoto), a city established some 150 years before the rebellion took place.

Heian, literally Peace and Tranquility, is the name of the period 794–1185, but this is something of a historical misnomer. Throughout the period, the city of Heian was rife with violence and pestilence, and natural disasters disrupted life with awesome regularity. By Masakado's day, privileged aristocrats, who comprised court officialdom and managed the affairs of state, had ceased to interest themselves in the chronic problems of lawlessness, misgovernment, and popular discontent that troubled the provinces both near to and far from the capital. Many of the court-appointed governors in the provinces had become self-aggrandizing outlaws who pursued their own private interests. Gangs of bandits and disgruntled farmers stole tax payments of rice destined for the capital, attacked local administration offices, and even assassinated governors and other officials installed by the central government. Peasants were reduced to extremes of poverty under the burden of harsh taxation and unreasonable corvée demands, and minor uprisings organized by alienated elements of society often erupted both before and after Masakado's rebellion. In short, Japan of Masakado's day was not the orderly, well-administered, and harmonious state that the idealistic reformers of the Nara period, 704–794, had envisioned when they enacted the massive economic and institutional reforms embodied in the Taihō Code, 701–702, and the Yōrō Code, 718.

Both of these codes had two main parts, one comprising a section of penal laws (*ritsu*) and the other a body of administrative institutions (*ryō*). *Ritsuryō* law, as the codes are generally called by historians, remained the foundation of the Japanese legal system until

[3] Today the term *gunkimono* is used interchangeably with *gunki monogatari*, 'war tales'. Those who favor *gunkimono* argue that the other term is imprecise and contradictory since it contains two disparate elements, *ki*, 'chronicle', and *monogatari*, 'tale'. Scholars who prefer the term *gunki monogatari*, on the other hand, feel that it is admirably suited to the genre because war tales have elements of both *ki* and *monogatari*. The term *gunki*, 'war chronicle', is also still in use, but it is generally restricted to war tales of the fifteenth century and later, or else more generally to battle records that lack literary interest.

the fifteenth century, despite the fact that, soon after these laws were put into effect, many of the institutions and procedures lost their original function and failed to be regularly enforced.[4] The main objective of the reforms was to create a strong central authority in the person of the emperor, through whom the resources of the state could be effectively controlled and utilized to build a powerful and politically unified nation. *Ritsuryō* law was modeled in large part upon the sophisticated and efficient Chinese bureaucracy established in the T'ang dynasty, 618–907. By emulating this system, the Japanese reformers aspired to raise their own state and government to a level of political organization and economic strength comparable to that of China, which was then one of the most advanced nations of the world.

In the course of implementing these reforms, Japan was transformed from a loose agglomeration of competing clans (*uji*) under the hegemony of the chieftain of the Yamato clan into an imperial state whose monarch was to command the absolute allegiance of all the people. The codes provided that all agricultural lands be made the property of the emperor. These lands were parceled out to individual cultivators, who were required to farm the plots, pay taxes, and be available for corvée labor and military service. The codes also provided for a complete political and administrative reorganization of the country. A complex civil bureaucracy with numerous ministries and offices was set up to serve the emperor. A new system of court ranks, posts, and perquisites was implemented to reward and distinguish the nobility who staffed the bureaucracy. In addition, the country was divided into sixty-six provincial administrations under the jurisdiction of governors appointed by the emperor. These officials were entrusted with enforcing imperial laws and edicts, collecting taxes regularly, drawing up population and tax records, and bringing wrongdoers to justice.

The institutions and indeed the very principles upon which the bureaucratic state was established in the eighth century were gradually but irrevocably eroded during the Heian period. By Masakado's time, the state had become radically different in substance, if not in outward form, from the system of government embodied in the *ritsuryō* codes. The machinery and trappings of the bureaucracy—its institutions and offices, legal codes, systems of ranks and titles, and the concept of imperial rule—remained intact, it is true, as did the system of provincial administration. But far-reaching

[4] Hall (2), p. 48.

economic and institutional changes were taking place within the system, changes that proved to be both irreversible and highly detrimental to the imperial institution as conceived by the Nara reformers.

For about a hundred years after the implementation of the Taihō and Yōrō codes, Japan had powerful emperors who ruled as well as reigned. But from the mid-ninth century, the great Fujiwara family began to control the court and the government through figurehead sovereigns who enjoyed virtually no political influence. Fujiwara daughters were married to powerless boy emperors, who were placed under the regency of Fujiwara family heads in whose hands political authority remained even after the young emperors attained majority. The establishment of the Fujiwara regency and a simplified system of 'house government' in Heian-kyō signified the abandonment of the *ritsuryō* ideal of a transcendent imperial authority distinct from the aristocracy that was supposed to serve it.[5]

As the prestige and influence of the emperor diminished, the imperial domain and hence the tax base of the imperial house were steadily eroded. As noted above, one of the fundamental principles of the Nara reforms was the state ownership of all agricultural lands. Gradually, however, these taxable public lands were replaced by private estates owned by nobles, religious institutions, and local powers. These estates, or *shōen*, acquired partial, or even full, immunity from taxation, thereby depriving the national government of much of its revenue.

The decentralization of control over land brought about by the spread of *shōen*, together with the Fujiwara domination of government, hastened the collapse of the bureaucratic system of centralized rule. A manifestation of this decline of authority was the disbanding of the national conscript army in the late eighth century in favor of a system of local militia. This new system placed the unpopular burden of policing the provinces upon the sons of the local gentry and thus contributed to the gradual militarization of the provincial aristocracy. These landed families came to exercise independent authority in law enforcement and police functions through the deployment of local militia and large private armies. 'It was the spread of this new local military upper class and its encroachment upon what had been the purely civil functions of government that marks the so-called "rise of the *bushi*" and the general return to private arms-bearing in Japanese society.'[6] It is a significant com-

[5] Hall (2), pp. 66–67.

[6] Hall (2), p. 79.

Procession marking the restoration of Masakado as a principal deity of Kanda Myōjin, Tokyo, on the night of 14 May 1984.

mentary on the times that the rebellion staged by Masakado was eventually quelled not by the central government but by the combined forces of two local military powers, Taira no Sadamori and Fujiwara no Hidesato, who commanded a combined army of four thousand men. The imperial court, meanwhile, looked on in stunned silence, awaiting word from afar that Masakado's rampage had been successfully put down and 'peace' restored to the area.

Shōmonki has the distinction of being the only detailed primary source of information on this major rebellion, an event known to historians as the *Taira no Masakado no Ran* (The Taira no Masakado Uprising) or the *Jōhei-Tengyō no Ran* (The Uprising of the Jōhei and Tengyō Periods [931–947]). Some Heian-period historical compilations and court diaries contain information on the uprising, but it is fragmentary and not always reliable. The sources cited most often in the notes to the present translation of *Shōmonki* are *Teishinkō Ki*, a diary written by Fujiwara no Tadahira, 880–948, whom Masakado once served; *Nihon Kiryaku*, a historical chronicle whose coverage extends from the Age of the Gods down to 1063; *Honchō Seiki*, a late-Heian historical compilation edited by Fujiwara no Michinori, d. 1159; and *Fusō Ryakki*, a historical record compiled by the monk Kōen, d. 1169, parts of which are of doubtful historicity. *Rekidai Kōki*, fourteenth century, and *Konjaku Mono-*

gatari-shū, ca. early twelfth century, provide some supplementary information on events leading up to the battle at Nomoto, the first event narrated in *Shōmonki*, but neither of these works is considered a reliable historical source on the rebellion.

In addition to three introductory chapters, the present work provides an annotated and complete translation of *Shōmonki*. The text poses unusual problems for the translator. It contains words and expressions not found elsewhere, and the difficulties of textual interpretation are compounded by grammatical irregularities in its sentence structure. Further, *Shōmonki* is encumbered by many orthographical errors, omissions, chronological gaps, and historical inconsistencies, indicating that it never underwent careful editorial revision. The notes accompanying the translation attempt to clarify some of these problems, and point out areas in which difficulties still remain. In general, the translation is based, except where otherwise noted, on the *Shimpukuji-bon* version of *Shōmonki*, the earliest dated copy of the text. However, where orthographical errors are found in this version, I have corrected the text using *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* or one of the other manuscripts, and these minor corrections are not individually recorded.[7] The explanatory notes set in smaller type in brackets within the translation are not my own; some were probably supplied by the author of *Shōmonki*, while others appear to be the addition of a later annotator. The unresolved problem of the attribution of these notes is taken up in Chapter Two.[8]

[7] Further information on *Shimpukuji-bon* and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* is provided in Chapter Two, pp. 34–39, below.

[8] Notes that merely identify words as the names of people or provinces have not been translated, nor have those that provide different ways, *on* and *kun*, of reading various words appearing in the text.

Chapter One

Historical Analysis

The Taira no Masakado Story

Peerless warrior, rebel, devoted husband, and gallant poet: these are some of the many sides of Taira no Masakado that are glimpsed in the pages of *Shōmonki*. Who was this enigmatic figure, this rebel and powerful military leader whom one historian has colorfully described as 'a sort of Japanese moss-trooper who . . . blundered into open rebellion and a mushroom sovereignty of his own'?[1]

Masakado was a descendant of Emperor Kammu, r. 781–806, through Kammu's great-grandson, Prince Takamochi. Takamochi received the surname Taira in 889, thereby founding the Kammu Heike line; in the same year he was appointed vice-governor of Kazusa, the province where he subsequently took up residence. The practice of downgrading the scions of blue-blooded nobility to the status of 'subjects' of the throne and sending them off to the provinces to establish new family lineages, for example, Minamoto and Taira, was well established in Takamochi's day. In view of the cultural deprivation and physical danger that life in hinterland areas such as the eastern provinces entailed, it is unlikely that Takamochi would have accepted this provincial assignment with much enthusiasm unless it offered considerable economic opportunities.

For most provincial officials the main attraction of life away from the capital seems not to have been the chance to serve the state but the chance to accumulate vast tracts of rice-producing land from which a sizable fortune could be built, a fortune enhanced by the perquisites and emoluments that came with the office. Takamochi's numerous sons—eight according to one genealogy, ten according to another[2]—gained power and influence in Kazusa, Shimōsa, and

[1] Murdoch, I, p. 255.

[2] For Takamochi's family tree and the names of his offspring, see the genealogical charts, pp. 142–43, below.

Hitachi provinces, where many of them held high provincial office and, like their father, worked to acquire extensive landholdings. Takamochi's third son, Yoshimasa, was awarded the junior fourth rank and appointed to the prestigious military post of commander-in-chief of the Northeastern Defense Headquarters.[3]

Yoshimasa had eight sons, the third of whom was Masakado. *Narita Sankeiki*, a late-Edo-period account of uncertain reliability, gives the year of Masakado's birth as 903, a date that cannot be verified.[4] There is also no record of Masakado having held a civil post in either the central or the provincial bureaucracy, but the possibility cannot be ruled out. As was the case with his Taira relations in the eastern provinces, Masakado is thought to have derived his income from his activities as a proprietor of rice-growing lands, believed to have been located in the districts of Sashima and Toyota in Shimōsa province.

The account of Masakado's activities in *Shōmonki* indicates that he had a small band of loyal followers who were probably engaged in agricultural work most of the time and made up the core of his military support when any fighting took place. Masakado lived in a fortified military residence, or *eisho*, located in the settlement of Kamawa in Toyota district, and this had an arms storehouse, sleeping quarters, and other installations. Later on, or possibly concurrently, he maintained an *eisho* in Iwai, also in Toyota. The *eisho* of Masakado's day were surrounded by an earthen wall and moat. Nearby there were extensive paddy fields where simple lodgings called *taya*, or 'field houses', were situated. These were used to accommodate farmers, who mostly worked as sharecroppers, and to store agricultural equipment.

Masakado is believed to have first traveled from the provinces to the capital in his middle or late teens to serve in the household of Fujiwara no Tadahira. *Shōmonki* preserves the text of a letter allegedly written by Masakado to Tadahira in the Twelfth Month of Tengyō 2 (939), when Tadahira was serving as chancellor (*daijō daijin*) and regent (*sesshō*) in the imperial court. In this letter, Masakado speaks of the 'decades that have passed' since he served Tadahira in his youth,[5] but exactly when he worked in that noble's household and the nature of his duties remain uncertain. The sobriquet Takiguchi no Shōjirō is noted alongside Masakado's name

[3] For the Northeastern Defense Headquarters, see p. 73, n. 5, below.
[4] Hayashi (2), p. 79.
[5] See p. 116, below.

in *Sompi Bummyaku*, a fourteenth-century genealogy. This may mean he was once a member of the Takiguchi Imperial Guards, a division of the Chamberlain's Office (*kurōdodokoro*) that was established in 889–897 and was garrisoned in the east garden of the *seiryōden*, the palace building where the emperor resided. Between ten and thirty men were selected for this coveted post. It is conceivable that Masakado, being highly skilled in martial arts, was indeed a Takiguchi guard at one time, possibly serving in this capacity at the same time as he worked in Tadahira's household. There is no evidence that he was awarded a rank while serving in the capital and it is doubtful whether one was ever conferred upon him.[6]

Masakado left the capital and returned to Shimōsa by the year 931. According to *Jinnō Shōtōki*, a history written between 1339 and 1343, he left the court feeling discouraged when he failed to gain a post in the Imperial Police Headquarters (*kebiishi-chō*), but this appears to have been based on speculation. Masakado's real reason for departure was possibly related to the death of his father, an event that occurred probably around 931. It is conjectured that family bickering over Yoshimasa's estate, part of which Masakado would have stood to inherit, was an important factor in the young man's decision to return to the provinces. It is at this juncture, after Masakado had become re-established in Shimōsa in the year 931, that *Shōmonki*'s account of his life begins.

The first seven years covered in *Shōmonki* occupy about half the text and are devoted to a series of battles between Masakado and various relatives, including Taira no Yoshikane and Taira no Yoshimasa, who were his paternal uncles, and Taira no Sadamori, his first cousin. Yoshikane and Sadamori were allied with Minamoto no Mamoru, their relative by marriage, in at least some of these battles. The second half of *Shōmonki*, which covers the period 938–940, narrates the developments leading to the uprising and describes the course of the event itself and its aftermath.

Unfortunately, the earliest Heian-period texts of *Shōmonki* lack their opening lines. These lines are preserved only in abbreviated form in a much later seventeenth-century abridged version of the work titled *Shōmon Ryakki*, based on a then-complete text.[7] *Shōmon Ryakki* relates Masakado's genealogy and explains that he had been on bad terms with Yoshikane since Enchō 9 (931), when the two

[6] Hayashi (2), p. 82, and Kajihara (7), II, p. 92.

[7] Further information on the *Shōmon Ryakki* version of the opening portion of *Shōmonki* is provided on p. 74, n. 8.

men had a dispute over a woman, possibly Yoshikane's daughter, whom it is speculated Masakado married against her father's will. An account of the Masakado story found in *Konjaku Monogatari-shū*, 25: 1, states that 'an unpleasant affair' as well as a dispute over the land of Masakado's late father had soured their relationship.[8] It is not known whether or not this dispute over land was described in the non-extant introductory portion of *Shōmonki*, but if it was, the compiler of the abridgment evidently did not consider it sufficiently important to retain.

The introductory portion from *Shōmon Ryakki* provides no background information on the period 931–935, so when *Shōmonki* abruptly begins in mid-sentence with the sons of Minamoto no Mamoru attacking Masakado at Nomoto in the Second Month of Jōhei 5 (935), we are at a loss how to connect these hostilities with the 931 dispute between Yoshikane and Masakado over a woman. The battle at Nomoto does not appear to have been related to this dispute, and although a territorial disagreement of some kind might have led to these hostilities, there are no grounds for concluding that Taira family problems, such as the disposal of the estate of Masakado's father, were necessarily a factor.

It is not known whether anyone outside the Minamoto family was directly involved in the fighting at Nomoto. According to *Rekidai Kōki*, Masakado's chief foes at Nomoto were Minamoto no Mamoru and Taira no Kunika, neither of whom is mentioned in *Shōmonki*'s account of the battle as it has come down to us.[9] Although we later learn that Kunika died around the time of the battle, the circumstances surrounding his death are vague and his participation in the fighting remains in doubt. There is nothing in the text to suggest that Masakado had been responsible for Kunika's death, although some genealogies and modern texts make this claim. It is clear only that Masakado killed the sons of Mamoru who had apparently attacked him without provocation or warning.

Taira no Sadamori was living in the capital at the time of the fighting at Nomoto. When he learned that his father had died, he returned to Hitachi to mourn his death and to care for his mother. At this point, he vanishes from the story for sixteen months, while the impetuous Yoshimasa, a half-brother of Yoshikane, makes his entrance.

[8] *Konjaku Monogatari-shū*, in NKBT XXV, p. 362.

[9] For a full translation of the passage from *Rekidai Kōki*, see p. 83, n. 52, below.

Yoshimasa was married to one of Mamoru's daughters and, unlike Sadamori, who valued both family ties and good relations with Masakado, he was totally dedicated to the Minamoto cause and felt it his duty to avenge the deaths of his Minamoto brothers-in-law who had died fighting at Nomoto. Yoshimasa engaged Masakado in battle at Kawawa in the Tenth Month of Jōhei 5 (935), but suffered a humiliating defeat. Determined to erase this ignominy, Yoshimasa wrote to Yoshikane requesting his assistance, whereupon the latter decided to join forces with his half-brother to bring an end to Masakado's 'evil rampage'. Yoshikane in turn managed to persuade Sadamori to join their alliance, although *Shōmonki* makes it clear that Sadamori's involvement came as a result of family pressure and a sense of obligation to his Minamoto in-laws rather than any personal hostility toward his cousin Masakado. In Sadamori's day, ties of marriage between different families were an indispensable means of cementing regional alliances and were sometimes considered more important than even blood relationships.

In the Sixth Month of Jōhei 6 (936), Yoshikane, Yoshimasa, and Sadamori fought against Masakado in the environs of the Shimotsuke provincial offices. Masakado once again emerged victorious, but magnanimously freed his uncle Yoshikane, who had been forced to take shelter in the government buildings. Yoshikane was not only Masakado's uncle but also his father-in-law and a ranking provincial official. Had Masakado killed him when the opportunity presented itself, the act would have been considered one of the eight great crimes and a capital offense.[10]

In the Tenth Month of that year, Masakado was summoned to the capital to defend himself against a suit filed by Mamoru over the death of the latter's sons. Although not found entirely innocent of the charges, he was granted a full pardon in the spring of the following year and was allowed to return home in the Fifth Month. Yoshikane meanwhile had spent the months of Masakado's absence preparing to attack him on his return, and in the Eighth Month he twice engaged his nephew in battle, defeating him soundly on both occasions. The author of *Shōmonki* attributes Masakado's first loss to 'the wrath of the gods', while his second is blamed on an attack of beriberi, which rendered him incapable of fighting effectively. Following this second engagement, Masakado's wife and child were captured by Yoshikane, and although they were later rescued and

[10] On the eight great crimes, see p. 85, n. 59, below.

returned safely to his side, Masakado never forgot the incident and became determined to kill Yoshikane at all costs.

Shōmonki goes on to describe three successes obtained by Masakado late in Jōhei 7 (937). In the Tenth Month, Masakado laid waste to Yoshikane's residence and fields in the area of Hatori in Hitachi; in the following month he succeeded in having the central government issue a warrant for the arrest of Yoshikane, Mamoru, Sadamori, and three others;[11] finally, he ably defended his Iwai residence against Yoshikane's night attack in the Twelfth Month. These triumphs enabled Masakado to gain an economic and psychological advantage over Yoshikane. In fact, Yoshikane is never mentioned again in the text except when his obituary is noted for the Sixth Month of Tengyō 2 (939) midway through the narrative.

With Yoshikane's passing from the scene, the once-important family dispute recedes into the background, with Sadamori remaining as Masakado's only strong family adversary. In the Second Month of Jōhei 8 (938) and in the Tenth Month of the following year, Masakado made two attempts to ambush and kill Sadamori, but both ended in failure and caused Sadamori to flee to the capital seeking legal redress. Since Sadamori was one of the six men named in the arrest warrant of 937, Masakado was in fact justified in trying to apprehend him. But when Sadamori complained to the authorities following his first encounter with Masakado in the Second Month of Jōhei 8, the government sided with him and issued a summons for Masakado to appear in court, a command that Masakado chose to ignore.

The second half of *Shōmonki* narrates the extraordinary and sometimes bewildering sequence of events that ultimately led to Masakado's death. This part of the text sees Masakado's emergence as a rebel, the emphasis of the story shifting from fighting within the family to Masakado's establishing ties with local powers outside both his family and his province of residence, Shimōsa. Sometime late in 938, or early in the following year, Masakado went to Musashi province to mediate a dispute between the popular and honest District Magistrate Musashi no Takeshiba and the provisional governor, Okiyo no Ōkimi, portrayed as a ruthless and corrupt administrator. Masakado's attempt to reconcile the two men

[11] Masakado had appealed to the Shimōsa government to take action against Yoshikane and his cohorts after they had forced him to do battle at Kogai and Horikoshi in the Eighth Month of Jōhei 7 (937), following his return from the capital. This warrant was issued in response to his appeal.

was aborted when Takeshiba's soldiers attacked Okiyo's ally, Minamoto no Tsunemoto, the vice-governor of Musashi, in the midst of the negotiations. Tsunemoto rashly concluded that Takeshiba, Okiyo, and Masakado were trying to kill him and were conspiring to organize an uprising. He fled to the capital, where he secretly reported his suspicions. The regent Fujiwara no Tadahira thereupon issued a directive ordering Masakado to answer the charges. Masakado responded by presenting documented evidence that his intentions in Musashi had been honorable, thereby regaining his good reputation for the time being.

In the Fifth Month of Tengyō 2 (939), a new governor, Kudara no Sadatsura, was installed in Musashi, and Okiyo, who was persona non grata, fled to Shimōsa, where he was granted asylum by Masakado. At about the same time, Masakado took in another seemingly disreputable character, a wealthy cultivator name Fujiwara no Haruaki, who had formerly made his home in Hitachi. At the time of his flight to Shimōsa, Haruaki was wanted in Hitachi on a number of criminal charges, but for reasons remaining unclear Masakado refused to cooperate with the authorities, concealing Haruaki's whereabouts and protecting him as one of his own followers. The author of *Shōmonki* does not explain Masakado's motives for aiding Okiyo and Haruaki, leaving the reader to wonder why such a strange and fateful alliance was established.

Haruaki soon prevailed upon Masakado to take up arms against his enemy, Fujiwara no Korechika, the vice-governor of Hitachi, and in the Eleventh Month of Tengyō 2 (939) Masakado marched on Hitachi at the head of a large army. There he issued an ultimatum calling for the revocation of the warrant for Haruaki's arrest. When the authorities rejected his demand, Masakado launched a full-scale attack on the government buildings, forced the vice-governor to surrender, and took over the provincial administration.

Although it had apparently not been Masakado's original intention to annex Hitachi, his unexpected success in overthrowing the government of the province seems to have aroused in him ambitions that Okiyo's own dreams of conquest helped to encourage. The two men held an important discussion early in the Twelfth Month, as a result of which the decision to conquer the entire Bandō region was reached.[12] Masakado evidently believed that his aristocratic lineage and martial prowess entitled him to assert his control over

[12] The Bandō region comprised eight provinces, listed on p. 107, n. 154, below, located in and around the area of present-day Tokyo.

the region, a vainglorious conviction that proved to be his undoing.

Following his consultation with Okiyo, Masakado captured the provinces of Shimotsuke and Kōzuke in rapid succession, ousting their top officials and seizing the seals and keys of government. He then held an investiture ceremony, in which his brothers and comrades were appointed to high offices throughout the eight Bandō provinces, including those that had not yet been annexed. According to *Shōmonki*, an oracle from the god Hachiman conferring upon Masakado the title of emperor was delivered through a shamaness in the middle of the investiture proceedings, and Masakado promptly assumed the title *shinkō*, or New Emperor, amidst great fanfare and rejoicing.

It is at this point in the narrative that we find the text of the aforementioned letter that was allegedly written by Masakado to his former lord, Fujiwara no Tadahira. Scholars are in disagreement over the authenticity of the letter, but even if the text were only the creation of *Shōmonki*'s author, it might nonetheless have been based on historical fact and must therefore be carefully examined.

Many of the data contained in the letter are either not found elsewhere in the text or are at variance with facts presented earlier in the narrative. For example, Masakado explains that he went to Hitachi with the intention of seeking justice for his follower Haruaki, who had allegedly been maligned by Fujiwara no Tamenori, the son of the vice-governor of Hitachi.[13] The letter also claims that Tamenori, in collusion with Sadamori, initiated the hostilities there, forcing Masakado to do battle in self-defense.[14] Neither Tamenori nor Sadamori is mentioned in the main narrative in connection with the battle in Hitachi. Further, the letter does not mention Masakado's various Bandō appointments or his assumption of the title of New Emperor; this may mean that either the events never took place, assuming the letter is authentic, or else that the letter was written some time before the appointments were made.[15]

After giving the text of this letter, *Shōmonki* recounts a dialogue between Masakado and two would-be advisors, who unsuccessfully tried to dissuade their lord from his plans of conquest. Masakado

[13] See p. 115, below.

[14] See p. 115, below.

[15] According to *Shōmonki*, Masakado wrote the letter following his assumption of the title New Emperor, which supposedly took place on or around Tengyō 2(939).12.19. But the date of the letter (Tengyō 2.12.15) appears to indicate that the document was written about four days before he became New Emperor.

Monument marking the location of Masakado's residence at Shimahiroyama, Iwai.

rebuked them for interfering, and proceeded to make a triumphant tour of the yet unannexed Bandō provinces, taking over their administrative offices with apparently little resistance. Once he had consolidated his control over the entire region, Masakado set out in the middle of the First Month of Tengyō 3 (940) to subdue his old elusive enemy, Sadamori. Although he did not succeed in finding him, his soldiers captured Sadamori's wife and the wife of Minamoto no Tasuku, Mamoru's deceased son, raping both women before Masakado could intervene on their behalf.

The penultimate battle that Masakado fought against Sadamori, who had by this time allied himself with Fujiwara no Hidesato, the provincial constable of Shimotsuke, took place at Kawaguchi in Shimōsa on Tengyō 3(940).2.1. Having only one thousand men on hand at the time, Masakado was easily defeated by his adversaries, who numbered more than four thousand. Two weeks later, on the 14th day of the Second Month, Masakado was killed fighting Sadamori and Hidesato at Kitayama, a hill not far from his own Iwai residence.

In the final pages of the narrative, the author offers a critical evaluation of Masakado's tragic career and describes the fate of his family and supporters as well as the various rewards granted to Hidesato, Sadamori, and Tsunemoto by a grateful court. The text ends with a message from Masakado's spirit, which describes the torments that he is suffering in hell for his sins committed in this world. The message, strongly folkloristic and didactic in character, stands out from the rest of the narrative and may well have been the addition of a later writer.

Background and Significance of the Uprising

In its day, the Masakado Uprising was seen as an unprecedented challenge to the authority and sovereignty of the imperial house. Insofar as Masakado actually took control of the eight Bandō provinces, ousting their top officials and replacing them with his own personal appointees, the rebellion was a more serious challenge to established authority than had been all previous outbursts of unrest. These earlier instances had in general been characterized by direct appeals to the court calling for the removal of venal officials and by physical attacks upon allegedly corrupt governors led by local powers and disgruntled peasants. Political chaos and social unrest in the eastern provinces did not originate with the Masakado Uprising; rather, the uprising was the culmination of decades of provincial disorder attendant upon the decline of the *ritsuryō* legal system in the ninth and tenth centuries.

Shōmonki offers few clues as to Masakado's true motives for undertaking the conquest of the Bandō region. It gives us to believe that he was driven mainly by excessive ambition and righteous indignation against the central government, which he felt had sided unfairly with his rival Sadamori in the ongoing dispute between the two men. The real situation was probably more complex than *Shōmonki* suggests, and may have involved regional ties, economic interests, and political problems not adequately explained in this or any other contemporary document. The total lack of other detailed and primary information on the Masakado Uprising has made accurate historical analysis of the event extremely difficult.

The principal concern in the following pages will be to investigate the historical background of the uprising. Particular attention will be paid to determining the factors underlying the breakdown of the *ritsuryō* system and to outlining the kinds of social unrest that accompanied the erosion of that system and set the stage for Masakado's massive attack on the established authority. Further

questions will concern the historical significance of the uprising and why violence continued to occur in the east in the decade following the revolt.

The Masakado Uprising seems to have stemmed largely from intense popular discontentment with the way in which local regions were being administered by centrally appointed officials. The reasons why Masakado and his followers attacked and occupied the Hitachi administrative offices and went on to capture seven other local governments are not plainly spelled out in *Shōmonki*. But consideration of other documented instances of violence directed at governors and provincial institutions suggests that these acts of violence were primarily intended as a protest against abuses of power committed by senior provincial officials. These included the theft of rice from public granaries, forcing rice loans upon cultivators at usurious rates, stealing private property, the unlawful seizure of public rice lands vacated by farmers, and oppressive taxation.

It is believed that Masakado and the other instigators of the rebellion shared economic interests as *dogō* (local magnates who were wealthy cultivators)[16] that pitted them against elements of the provincial aristocracy, and that their supporters during the uprising included not only *dogō* proprietors but also *gunji* (district magistrates),[17] low-level provincial officials, and peasant cultivators. As *dogō*, Masakado and his allies were in direct competition with governors and other ranking public officials who, like the *dogō*, were bent on accumulating large untaxed estates. This intense competition, aggravated by the abuses and violations of the laws committed by provincial officials, was a key element in the growing alienation

[16] Yamamura, p. 22, defines *dogō* as 'the powerful landowners out in the provinces' who in origin were 'wealthy cultivators' and 'owned slaves or commanded power over marginal cultivators.' Yamamura notes that 'some of the *dogō* became district magistrates and cooperated with the provincial governors and district magistrates in exchange for their silent consent to the illegal opening of land by the *dogō*.'

Some *dogō*, such as Masakado and Haruaki, were descendants of provincial rather than district officials, while others arose from the peasantry without the benefit of aristocratic connections.

[17] *Gunji* were recommended to the court for permanent appointment by provincial governors, who nearly always selected prominent local citizens from the old pre-Nara gentry. Sansom, p. 163. It was the practice of *gunji* to pass on the office to their heirs. *Gunji* collected taxes under the supervision of the governor, maintained local records, and arbitrated disputes. Relations between district magistrates and governors were often strained, if not openly rancorous, as the case of District Magistrate Takeshiba and Provisional Governor Okiyo illustrates.

between the *dogō*/peasant sector and provincial officialdom in the late-ninth and early-tenth centuries.

According to Kozo Yamamura, the conflict of interests between governors on the one hand and *dogō* and *gunji* on the other became more frequent during the second half of the ninth century. During the same period, the power of the governors underwent a relative decline, while that of the latter groups, who began to 'align themselves with the powerful in the capital,'[18] continued to grow. In view of this development, it is reasonable to conjecture that the uprising was an attempt by Masakado and his *dogō*/*gunji* allies to tip the balance of power further in their favor by taking over control of the provincial administrative machinery, thereby gaining in political authority what they had already managed to achieve in terms of economic wealth.[19] At the same time, they could rid the system of the injustices and abuses of power that had come to be associated with the centrally appointed provincial elite.

Much has been written about the decline of the *ritsuryō* system, but perhaps the fundamental reason for its gradual erosion in the ninth and tenth centuries was that the political elite abused and circumvented the system in order to gain economic advantage. As Yamamura states, from the time the system was adopted in the early eighth century the throne was in the weak position of having to buy the support of potential challengers to its fragile hegemony by granting them substantial economic and political rewards. 'Such rewards had the inevitable consequence of strengthening the political and economic power of the recipients who, using their increasing power, were able to demand more and get more from the system.'[20] This in short was the principal flaw inherent in the system.

The *ritsuryō* system was in fact much too sophisticated for the society of that time, being too costly and difficult to administer effectively. The system required not only considerable manpower for tasks such as resurveying the land and conducting population censuses, but also more motivation and diligence on the part of local officials than they were generally prepared to offer. From the ninth century it became increasingly difficult for the government to find responsible and dedicated provincial officers who were willing to put service before self.

[18] Yamamura, p. 24.

[19] This conjecture derives from Ishimoda (1), pp. 153–54, in his discussion of the relationship between *dogō* and court-appointed governors.

[20] Yamamura, p. 27.

Provincial officials were land-hungry and tried to increase their own private holding during their term of office by both legal and illegal means. Even after their term had ended, many stayed on in the provinces so that they could increase their land holdings, and this became the main occupation of most ex-governors. The abuses committed by governors to acquire more land are well documented; in addition to those mentioned above, these included the outright theft of public land, forcing peasants to relinquish fertile *kubunden* (official paddy allotments made to individuals by the central government) in exchange for unproductive paddies, the falsification of land and population records, and demanding illegal corvée.

The acquisition of *shōen* proceeded apace during the tenth through the twelfth centuries by means of conventionally acceptable practices as well, such as the reclamation of undeveloped areas, the purchase of peasant holdings,[21] and the commendation of land to influential nobles and religious institutions in the capital. The proprietors of such commended properties not only enjoyed a share in the proceeds from harvests, but also, under the umbrella of official protection, were able to stave off the threat of confiscation by avaricious governors.

As stated above, the *gunji* and *dogō* had economic ambitions no less than those of the governors with whom they were in competition. Unlike the governors, however, they tended to reside in the same provincial locality from birth and maintained a close relationship with the local peasants, who were essential to their economic security and were their main source of military strength. As might be expected, peasants suffered great economic hardship as a result of the misgovernment and exploitation on the part of provincial officials. Under the strain of harsh taxation and forced corvée, many peasants absconded and became vagrants, while others sought employment on the properties of wealthy *dogō* who were sympathetic to their plight.

Although some governors realized that it was to their own advantage to reach a modus vivendi with the *dogō* and *gunji*, violent

[21] Under the Taihō Code, rice lands could not be bought or sold since they were considered the property of the state. Nonetheless, there was a gradual increase in permanent ownership of land among cultivators, stemming from the discontinuation of official land (*kubunden*) redistribution in the ninth century and from the fact that cultivators had the right to lay claim to undeveloped lands, which were not part of the public domain. Hall (2), p. 68. These permanently held lands were bought and sold with apparent impunity throughout the Heian period.

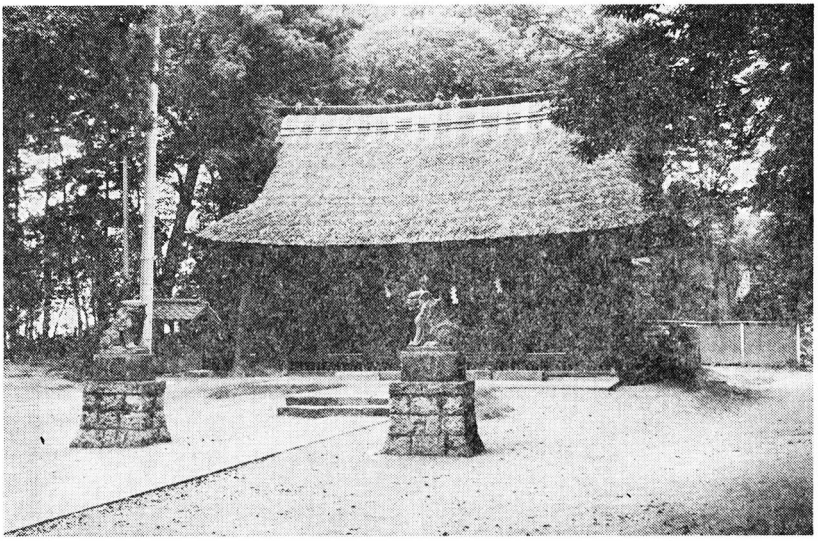
clashes were frequent, judging from records dating from the second half of the ninth century and the tenth century. In 857 the governor of Tsushima was attacked and killed by a mob of more than three hundred *dogō* and peasants led by two district magistrates, and in 884 two hundred and seventy men, including provincial government workers, district magistrates, and peasants, attacked the provisional governor of Iwami at his residence.[22] Later, in 915, the vice-governor of Kazusa, the acting chief executive, was killed by a group of wealthy peasants in collusion with the senior secretary of that province.[23] Numerous other assaults of this kind are recorded in contemporary annals.

During this period there was also a dramatic increase in the number of appeals to the central government calling for the punishment or transfer of allegedly corrupt governors. These appeals were typically initiated by *gunji* and *dogō*, but lower-level provincial officials were sometimes also involved in the protests. The conspicuous flow of appeals to the court as well as the high incidence of violent attacks on governors indicate the level of socio-political unrest in the provinces at this time.

The eastern provinces in particular were much troubled by violence and disorder during the second half of the ninth and the tenth centuries, owing in large part to the adverse economic conditions prevailing there. Viewed as a kind of frontier region in ancient times, the eastern region of the country was used for colonization and economic exploitation by the central government. Large numbers of foreigners, Koreans in particular, were settled there to work mines, stem the flooding of rivers, and labor on projects such as land reclamation. At the same time, the east was a battleground for military campaigns against hostile tribesmen. Since local peasants were forced to shoulder much of the national burden for the defense of the vulnerable region, many of them suffered severe economic hardship despite the great potential of the fertile paddy land there.

To meet the heavy expenses of the military campaigns of the late eighth and early ninth centuries, heavy taxes and forced labor were exacted from the peasants in the Bandō region. In addition, a disproportionately large number of men from the area were drafted into the army, causing labor shortages and further hardship for

[22] Ishimoda (1), p. 153, and Miyake, p. 179.
[23] Miyake, p. 179.



Kokuō Jinja, Iwai, where Masakado is enshrined. The shrine is said to have been established in 972 by Masakado's daughter.

their families.[24] Also, from the mid-eighth century on, most *sakimori* (frontier guards stationed in northern Kyushu) were drawn from the eastern provinces, instead of evenly from across the land as specified by law, because of the region's reputation for producing skillful fighting men, advanced weaponry, and superior horses. The military draft and related expenses severely damaged agricultural productivity, leading to widespread destitution and peasant discontent. No doubt this unfair military burden was one reason for the observation made by the author of *Shōmonki* that 'nowhere in the world were turmoil and destitution more extreme than in Shimotsuke,' p. 110, below.

Owing to their distance from the capital, the eastern provinces were not so well administered by the national government as were the more centrally located provinces. Thus, the abuses of the eastern governors were particularly flagrant and violence often continued unchecked, further compounding the distress of the general population. In addition to physical assaults on governors, other

[24] Following the adoption of the *kondei* system (a local militia recruited from the households of the local gentry) in 792, each of the Bandō provinces, with the exception of Awa, was made to provide on average two or three times more soldiers than any other provinces. Hayashi *et al.*, p. 23.

kinds of violent protest were endemic in the east at this time. For example, incidents involving gangs of bandits called *shūba no tō* (men hired to transport goods by horse) often occurred in the Bandō for about ten years around the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth centuries, particularly in the provinces of Sagami, Kazusa, and Musashi.[25] The *shūba no tō* were followers of the *dogō* and had come to manage local transport as professional contractors owing to the breakdown of the old post system caused by resistance from peasants who had been forced to provide the necessary labor. The gangs operated along the Tōkaidō and Tōsandō highways, stealing government packhorses and tax produce being transported to the capital. The activities of the *shūba no tō* can be interpreted as a form of economic protest directed against *ritsuryō* authority, a sort of popular resistance that enjoyed broad public support and constituted a precedent for the more massive assault on authority made by Masakado and his army of rebels.[26]

Another phenomenon peculiar to the eastern region was the uprisings of the *fushū*, who were *emishi*, or subjugated tribesmen possibly of Ainu extraction.[27] These revolts appear to have been most frequent in Kazusa, Shimōsa, and Dewa provinces, and most occurred during the last quarter of the ninth century. In one typical incident recorded in 883, a thousand soldiers were mobilized by the vice-governor of Kazusa to put down a revolt of some thirty *fushū* in Ichihara district of that province.[28] Other large-scale rampages occurred in Dewa around the same time and were apparently intended as a protest against government oppression and poor living standards. The alleged aim of one revolt there in 878 was to force the government to release a large tract of land for the creation of an independent *fushū* domain, an objective not unlike Masakado's own.[29]

[25] Shima, p. 1. Kitayama (1), p. 125, speculates that the activities of the *shūba no tō* continued throughout the first half of the tenth century and became even more outrageous around the time of the Masakado Uprising, but concrete evidence of this is lacking.

[26] Shima, pp. 1–2; Miyake, pp. 185–90; and Ishimoda (2), p. 197.

[27] The ethnic origins of the *emishi*, or *ezo* as they were called from the Heian period on, are still unclear. Traditionally, *emishi* have been identified with the Ainu, who may have occupied the entire country before being driven northward by the encroaching Yamato civilization. Another possibility is that the *emishi* were ethnically the same as the Japanese but resisted becoming part of the state until they were subjugated by the Heian court in the ninth century.

[28] Sakamoto Shōzō, p. 166.

[29] Ishimoda (1), p. 154.

Finally, there are records, albeit fragmentary, of other small-scale uprisings in the Bandō region during the ninth and early tenth centuries. In 899, for example, the leader of a band of thieves named Mononobe no Ujinaga rose up in rebellion in one of the eastern provinces and it took the authorities no less than ten years to put it down completely.[30] According to *Honchō Seiki* for Tengyō 2(939). 5.15, there had occurred another revolt in that region back in the Second Month of Engi 1 (901), the details of which are not known.[31] Thus, although Masakado's intentions were certainly different from those of Ujinaga or the leader of the 901 revolt, his was by no means the first uprising in the east by men other than *fushū*.

In a feeble attempt to restore order, *kebiishi*, or local gendarmes, were sent into several Bandō provinces in the second half of the ninth century, but with only one allotted to a province (or in the case of Musashi, one to a district), they could do little to put an end to the disorder.[32] Ninth- and tenth-century land reform measures directed at reviving the *kubunden* system and arresting the privatization of land also proved ineffective. Indeed, the flood of repetitive government edicts directed to troubled areas such as the Bandō underscores the futility of the official attempts to regain control over public revenues, stem the rampant abuses of the day, and restore law and order.

The court might well have been able to devote more attention to the unrest in the Bandō had it not been plagued by so many of its own security problems within Heian-kyō itself. The quality of life there had fallen so low that the central government could scarcely maintain law and order. Starting in the Seventh Month of Engi 17 (917), for example, fires raged unchecked in the city for several months; people were starving and thieves roamed freely.[33] To combat rampant crime in the streets, the government set up a residential policing system called *michi-moriya* in the Fifth Month of Enchō 3 (925).[34] When this unrest close at hand is taken into account, it is no wonder that disturbances far away in the remote eastern region were not the court's first priority.

[30] Sakamoto Shōzō, pp. 166–67.

[31] Sakamoto Shōzō, p. 167.

[32] Musashi was apparently the first province to have *kebiishi* installed in each of its districts, this taking place in 861. In 867, one *kebiishi* was placed in Kazusa, and two years later one was dispatched to Shimōsa. In the case of the last two provinces, the problem of *fushū* uprisings was probably the main factor in their receiving *kebiishi* assistance. Sakamoto Shōzō, pp. 165–66.

[33] According to *Nihon Kiryaku*, in DNS, I. 4, p. 925.

[34] According to *Saigūki*, in DNS, I. 5, p. 678.

Masakado's uprising lasted little more than two months in all, from the time when he decided to annex the Bandō in the Twelfth Month of Tengyō 2 (939) to his defeat and death at Kitayama on Tengyō 3(940).2.14. According to *Shōmonki*, Masakado used this short period to fill almost all the vacancies in his miniature imperial bureaucracy, choose his official seals, and even make plans to build a palace from which to rule his small empire. But historians suspect that his actual accomplishments during his two months of power were limited to the ousting of top provincial officials in the eight Bandō provinces and the appointment of replacements from among his relatives and allies. It seems unlikely that he was able to set up functioning government offices in his proposed 'capital' or make appointments to the many civil and military posts in his central bureaucracy.

On the basis of *Shōmonki*'s account of his political ambitions, Masakado appears to have intended to establish a monarchical system of government modeled on the imperial bureaucracy in the capital—a smaller, more efficient and responsible government, to be sure, but not an entirely new form of political administration to supersede the old. There is no indication that Masakado's governing apparatus was to be anything but a replica of the old *ritsuryō* system, one in which only the scale of operation and the personalities in power had changed. The Masakado Uprising was therefore a rebellion, not a revolution.

In his letter to Fujiwara no Tadahira written after his takeover of Kōzuke, Masakado declares: 'I am indisputably a fifth-generation descendant of Emperor Kashiwabara. Were I to gain control over half the land permanently, it would surely be admitted that this was my due fortune.' Expressing regret that his takeover had occurred during the regency of his former lord, Masakado plays the courtier with the words, 'How could I have forgotten Your Excellency, my former master?' (p. 116, below). In view of these sentiments, which reflect both his self-image as a blue-blooded imperial descendant and his undiminished feelings of closeness to his former lord Tadahira, it is not surprising that Masakado's plan for government in the Bandō offered no real departures from the existing system. The letter reveals that, even after assuming the title of New Emperor—one of the most treasonous acts in the history of Japan —Masakado never ceased to conceive of his own political legitimacy as deriving from his imperial pedigree as a descendant of Kammu. He believed, moreover, that his proven strength as a military leader in the east was further justification for his assumption of power in

that region: 'Every history book', he writes in the letter, 'tells of men who in ancient times seized control of empires by force. I have been endowed by Heaven with martial prowess; when I consider the matter, who among my peers can compare with me?' (p. 116, below).

The Masakado Uprising was a shocking and sensational event in its day because it was the first attempt by a local power to establish an autonomous regional government. One might reasonably expect the court to have undertaken major reforms in response to this grave challenge, but most modern historians have not been able to detect any significant changes in government policy directly attributable to this event.[35] In analyzing the historical significance of the Masakado Uprising, scholars have generally emphasized that the revolt represented the coming-of-age of a provincial military elite capable of organizing itself under the leadership of influential local figures. In the extensive military alliances formed by Masakado and his adversaries, Hidesato and Yoshikane, we see the prototype of the eastern *bushidan*, warrior cliques or bands, whose growth and development were among the most significant social phenomena of the middle- to late-Heian period. Formed on the basis of mutual regional interests and family alliances, the *bushidan* were characterized by 'new ties of association which . . . cut across the power structure which centered on the court.'[36] The formation of these military ties is thought to have been promoted by the expansion of the provincial aristocracy's role to include military and policing functions, a development that had its beginnings in the ninth century when officials began to ask permission to bear arms.[37]

[35] A notable exception is Inoue Michirō, who has suggested that the Masakado and Sumitomo uprisings (see below) gave rise to important administrative changes in the mid-Heian period, such as the emergence of the imperial regency as the dominating power at court in the decades following the two revolts. In Inoue's view, the instability created by the uprisings was a primary factor leading to the centralization of court power in the hands of the Hokke Fujiwara, who 'used the uprisings to try to establish an autocratic system of government.'

Inoue further speculates that changes in the appointment of *ōryōshi*, or provincial constables, after the Masakado Uprising were part of the government's attempt to strengthen police authority in the provinces in direct response to the revolt. Inoue (2), pp. 253–55.

Although Inoue's views have attracted scholarly attention, they are not supported by sufficient evidence to win general acceptance.

[36] Hall (1), p. 134.

[37] Hall (1), pp. 131–32 & 134.

Masakado's warrior band was a locus of military power centering upon Toyota and Sashima districts in Shimōsa. It comprised members of his family as well as outsiders such as Haruaki, a *dogō* from Hitachi, and Okiyo, a former Musashi official. Although Masakado's military organization differed from later *bushidan* in that the core of his military force—his permanent followers—were few in number, perhaps less than a hundred, he commanded prestige and military authority sufficient to mobilize an army of as many as eight thousand men when a major offensive was being planned. Ties between Masakado and his followers were based on a relationship of mutual dependence and security, but at this early stage in the development of the *bushidan* there were no formal, contractual oaths of permanent allegiance, nor were military followers rewarded by the leader with fiefs or land rights (*shiki*), as was the case in later times.

In the twelfth century the formation of numerous and more stable *bushidan* served as a basis for the realignment of local power under the leadership of Minamoto no Yoritomo, 1147–1199. These extensive regional cliques provided the foundation of the network of organized military support essential to Yoritomo's success in the Gempei Wars, 1180–1185, that brought the Heian period to a close and ushered in the age of warrior rule under which feudalism evolved. The development of these large *bushidan* in the middle- and late-Heian period was undoubtedly given considerable impetus by the Masakado and other uprisings. First, these extended military disturbances created an ideal climate for the emergence of outstanding military leaders such as Hidesato and Sadamori, who found in these outbreaks of lawlessness the opportunity to test their own strength.[38] Second, through their success in putting down these disturbances they not only gained confidence in their military capabilities, but were also able to develop their respective followings into larger and more cohesive organizations.

The central government did not seek to curtail these newly arisen military powers; on the contrary, it appointed them to high provincial posts and constableships.[39] In this way, it tried to use the

[38] Hall (1), p. 136.

[39] For example, Hidesato, the principal frustrator of Masakado's revolt, was promoted from secretary/*ōryōshi* of Shimotsuke to governor of that province, bypassing the vice-governorship. For a discussion of the central government's growing dependence on local figures such as Hidesato, see Kitayama (1), pp. 185–205, and Kitayama (2), pp. 229–37.

power of the local military men to bolster the authority of the declining imperial institutions, a strategy that ironically proved counterproductive to court interests in the long term.

The successful suppression of the Masakado Uprising by local powers by no means meant the end of disorder in the Bandō region. The most serious incident after the Masakado disturbance was the Sumitomo Uprising, 939–941, a large-scale operation led by Fujiwara no Sumitomo, d. 941, involving piracy at sea and the plundering of provincial government offices in western Japan. Although one historical record for Tengyō 2(939).12.29 indicates that some people at court believed the overlapping uprisings of Masakado and Sumitomo to be the result of collusion between the two men,[40] there is no reliable historical evidence that such collusion actually existed. It is a telling commentary on the lassitude and military incompetence of the authorities that *tsuibushi*, or sheriffs, were not appointed to deal with the Sumitomo threat until early in 940, several years after piracy had become endemic in the Inland Sea area. Moreover, it was not until eighteen months after the sheriffs' appointment that Sumitomo was finally killed and some degree of order was restored to that region.

Other serious disturbances are recorded in the decade following the Masakado Uprising. Only a few months after Masakado's death, for example, a man named Masatane (this may be an error for Masatame, Masakado's brother) conspired with the provisional vice-governor of Mutsu to launch an uprising, and this caused much concern at court. In nearby Dewa in 946 an *ezo* leader named Sakamaru led an armed attack on one of Sadamori's subordinates in the Northeastern Defense Headquarters. The much-hated, tyrannical vice-governor of Mino was murdered in 944 by some local adversaries.[41] This is only a sampling of the numerous incidents of violence recorded in the chronicles of the 940s.

In the later years of the Tengyō period, 938–947, there were many instances of requests for the installation of *kebiishi* not only in the Bandō provinces but also in more central areas, apparently in an attempt to bring the weight of the central government to bear on the menace of violence threatening the lives of the governors. Governors at this time commonly sought concurrent appointment to the post of *ōryōshi* so that they could claim the authority to augment their private military following with additional soldiers for

[40] *Honchō Seiki*, in DNS, I. 7, p. 599.

[41] For these and other incidents, see Kitayama (1), pp. 184 & 199–202.

defense and policing functions. The absorption of *ōryōshi* duties by governors naturally assisted them in becoming military powers in their own right, and the continuing disturbances helped to justify their assumption of such official duties.

In the decades following the Masakado Uprising, the imperial court remained less involved in provincial affairs, with the notable exception of its own *shōen* interests, and relied to an increasing degree upon governors to deal with the almost unceasing disorder in local regions. Symptomatic of the growing separation between the government and the provinces was the court's failure or disinclination to carry out provincial reform in the aftermath of the uprising. No laws were enacted to check governors' abuses with regard to taxes and the administration of land, nor were any concerted efforts made to limit the build-up of private armed forces, in particular in the eastern provinces. In short, for all the psychological shock caused by the uprising, none of it was translated into progressive reform.

While there was perhaps a certain wisdom, at least in the short term, in the way that the court relinquished power to the already influential provincial elite, the central government was in effect placing itself at the mercy of local powers, who were prepared only to prop up the imperial machinery as long as it continued to serve their own interests. The court originally hoped that placing more authority in the hands of governors would effectively counter the increasing power and military capability of the *dogō*. But local tensions grew more acute under the court's weak policy toward the provincial aristocracy. The provincial leadership became virtually a law unto itself, and until a new transcendent government authority could be forged by Yoritomo out of the upheaval of the late twelfth century, social strife and political turmoil would continue to prevail in the eastern hinterland.

Chapter Two

Texts, Date, and Authorship

Early Texts

The two earliest extant texts of *Shōmonki* are *Shimpukuji-bon*, dated Shōtoku 3 (1099), and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, an undated manuscript probably written during the tenth or eleventh century. Since both of these texts lack their opening section where the title would have appeared, it is impossible to know what they were originally called. The earliest known use of the title *Shōmonki* occurs in *Gempei Seisuiki*, a war tale dating from the mid-thirteenth century. Although this title may have been in use when *Shimpukuji-bon* and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* were written, there is no record of what the text was in fact called at that time.[1]

Titles incorporating the term *kassenjō*, 'battle account', appear to have been widely used for editions of *Shōmonki* in circulation during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, judging from secondary references to and quotations from *Shōmonki* found in documents of the period. For example, *Azuma Kagami*, ca. 1250–1300, speaks of a text titled *Taira no Masakado no Kassenjō*, and *Hōbutsu-shū*, ca. 1182–1189, similarly makes reference to *Masakado no Kassenjō*.[2] While it is tempting to speculate that one of these *kassenjō* titles was the original title of the story, we will probably never know for certain unless

[1] Okada (1), p. 12, speculates that the title *Shōmonki* came to be used in medieval times by persons familiar with other *gunkimono* having the word *ki* in their titles, works such as *Gempei Seisuiki*, *Gikeiki*, and *Taiheiki*, all products of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Kawaguchi (1), p. 435, observes that the word *ki* is used in Chinese narratives as far back as the seventh century and on this basis hypothesizes that the present title may well derive from a more ancient '*ki*' title, such as *Masakado ga Ikusa no Nikki* (The Masakado Battle Journal) or *Masakado Kassen Ki* (Record of the Battles of Masakado).

[2] Variations of these titles are found, such as *Masakado no Kassenjō* or simply *Kassenjō*, where *-jō* is written with 章 instead of the homophonous 状. Hayashi (3), pp. 8–9, and Kawaguchi (1), p. 453.

fresh evidence appears. Since the titles of war tales tended to change over the centuries, it would not be safe to assume that any of the above titles were necessarily in use as far back as the tenth century, when *Shōmonki* is believed to have been written.

For several reasons, most translations of *Shōmonki* into modern Japanese have been based on *Shimpukuji-bon* rather than on *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*. Although the former lacks the opening lines, it is more complete than the latter text, which is only a little more than half as long. Further, *Shimpukuji-bon* contains fewer scribal errors and omissions, has suffered less textual damage, and is more neatly written. All in all, it gives the impression of being a more faithful reproduction of the original text. *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* is nonetheless invaluable for the study of *Shōmonki*. Not only is it useful for correcting errors found in *Shimpukuji-bon* but in many cases it also provides alternative phrases or expressions that seem more logical or otherwise preferable. Although *Shimpukuji-bon* has been studied more closely in the present century than *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, the latter will probably be accorded more attention in the future, especially if the theory that it was written before *Shimpukuji-bon* wins general acceptance among scholars.

Shimpukuji-bon

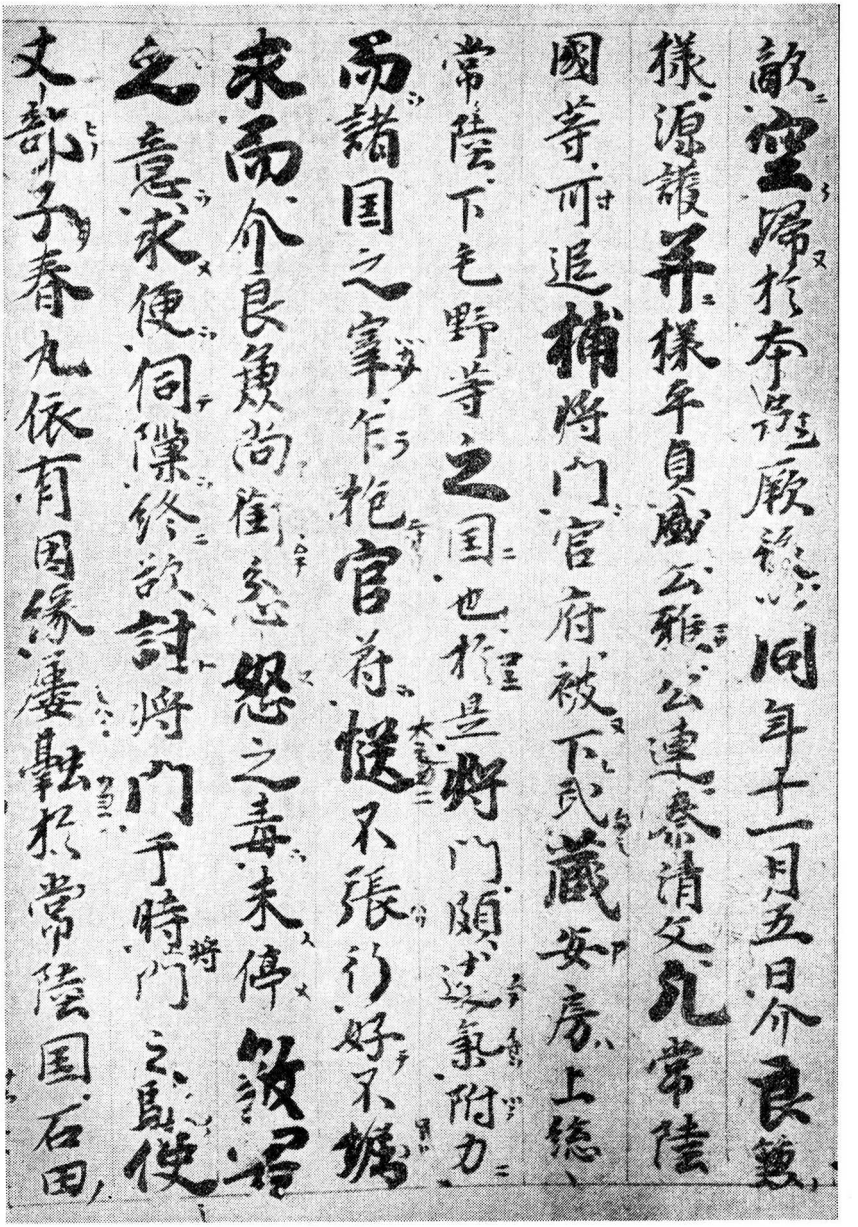
Shimpukuji-bon is the property of Shimpukuji in Nagoya. It has been owned by that institution for centuries, but exactly when the manuscript found its way into the temple archives is not known. The colophon gives Shōtoku 3(1099).1.29 and 2.10 as the dates of writing and checking the text. Daichibō, the place where the transcription was made, has not been positively identified, but it appears to be the name of a temple.[3]

The calligraphy of *Shimpukuji-bon* is done skillfully in a near-*kaisho* (square, standard) style, and the manuscript presents a polished appearance. The text has punctuation marks, *kaeriten*,[4] pitch marks, *on* and *kun* readings (Japanized Chinese pronunciations and Japanese semantic glosses), and *okurigana*,[5] all of which were probably inserted into the text not long after it was written. These marginalia

[3] For Daichibō, see p. 141, n. 310.

[4] Dot-like or numerical symbols (or in later times, v-shaped marks) placed to the left of characters in Chinese texts to assist Japanese readers in translating the texts into Japanese.

[5] *Kana* (Japanese syllabic letters) added to a Chinese character to indicate its Japanese declension.



A page from the collotype reproduction of the Shimpukuji-bon text (corresponding to pp. 91–92 of the translation), showing the unusual diagonal pattern of bold characters found in one part of the text.

make this an extremely valuable document for the study of Heian-period phonology, grammar, and lexicology.

Inaba Michikuni, 1744–1801, a *kokugaku*, or National Learning, scholar, discovered the text in Shimpukuji in 1782. In 1799, another *kokugaku* scholar named Uematsu Arinobu, 1745–1813, produced a woodblock edition that brought the text into wide circulation for the first time. Koten Hozonkai (Committee for the Preservation of Classical Texts) made a collotype reproduction of the manuscript in 1924, enabling scholars to study the text with the benefit of the original eleventh-century readings and other marginalia. When the woodblock edition was made in 1799, it was estimated that the missing portion at the beginning of *Shimpukuji-bon* amounted to about ten or more lines, although it is not known on what this assessment is based. In its present form, the manuscript is 558 lines in length, excluding the colophon, in all amounting to some 55 pages in the modern collotype edition.

The *Shimpukuji-bon* text of *Shōmonki* ends with Masakado's message from hell and a date notation, 'Recorded during the Sixth Month, Tengyō 3 [940]' (see p. 139, below), which appears to signify when the original *Shōmonki* was completed. Following this notation, there is a quotation from an unidentified variant text that provides an alternative, and more satisfactory, ending to the narrative.[6] Although I agree with Nagazumi Yasuaki that this quotation runs to the end of the document where the colophon is found, the question of its exact length is debated among scholars because the end of the quotation is not actually marked in the text.[7] Kajihara Masaaki speculated that the quotation is only two sentences in length, terminating where n. 306 of the present translation is found on p. 140, below. In his view, the *Shimpukuji-bon* narrative does not end where this date notation appears, but instead continues all the way down to the colophon, with only a brief interruption—a mere thirty-two characters in the original text—where the passage from the variant text is quoted. As for the date notation, Kajihara does not consider it to be a terminal date indicating when *Shōmonki* was written but rather when the message from hell was supposedly written.[8]

[6] The quotation from the variant text contains a short passage (32 characters) from Masakado's message from hell, followed by a closing paragraph of 116 characters.

[7] Further information is provided on p. 139, n. 305.

[8] Kajihara (7), II, p. 365.

I favor Nagazumi's interpretation partly on the strength of a scribal notation that appears on p. 55 of the collotype edition of *Shimpukuji-bon*. This note refers to the quotation from the variant text, informing the reader that it is to be found in the colophon (*okugaki*) of *Shimpukuji-bon*. The scribe who inserted this note evidently believed that the main narrative terminated where the date notation is found and that the quotation from the variant text was appended to the end of *Shōmonki*. Also, as discussed in greater detail below, Nagazumi makes a convincing case for accepting this date as a terminal date; Kajihara, on the other hand, has not shown persuasively why it should not be accepted as such and why it should instead be considered a fictitious embellishment having a bearing only upon the message from hell.

The fragment from the variant text quoted in *Shōmonki* is the only part of that text remaining in existence. It is possible that this text was *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, but it will probably never be known for certain since the final portion of the latter has been lost. We may safely say that there were at least two texts of *Shōmonki* in existence when *Shimpukuji-bon* was written in the eleventh century: the one on which the *Shimpukuji-bon* copy was primarily based and this other variant text. We can only speculate which was the older and which was closer in language and form to the non-extant original text.

Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon

The *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* version of *Shōmonki* is so named because it bears the seal of Yang Shou-ching (J. Yō Shukei), 1839–1915, a Chinese diplomat who visited Japan in 1880 and purchased the manuscript. Yang is thought to have been primarily interested in a Buddhist text copied on the reverse side of the manuscript, a work titled *Pien-chung pien-lun* (J. *Benchū Benron*), which was originally written in 661.[9] All that is known about the earlier history of this text is that it once belonged to Kashiwagi Takaichirō, who presumably sold it to Yang. The circumstances surrounding the return of *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* to Japan are unknown, but this probably happened sometime after Yang's death in 1915 when his library was broken up. Thereafter the manuscript belonged to a succession of owners, the present one being Katakura Takeo.

[9] A note presumably written by Yang on the *Pien-chung pien-lun* side of the manuscript indicates that he was at least aware that *Shōmonki* was written on the other side of the paper. Yamada Tadao (1), p. 1.

Only the mid-section of *Shōmonki* is preserved in *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*; some 351 lines of text, it amounts to about five-eighths of the length of the *Shimpukuji-bon* manuscript. It is not known when the text lost its beginning and final portions, but it was already in its present incomplete form when the *Shōmonki* scholar Oda Kanshi wrote about it in 1907.[10] There is still hope that a more complete version of this text will someday come to light, perhaps in the form of an early handwritten copy or a Chinese reproduction made during the decades when the text was kept in China.

Although the two texts show no major differences in the ordering of their sentences, *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* contains as many as 361 phrases differing substantially from their counterparts in *Shimpukuji-bon*. In the opinion of Yamada Tadao, who has made a detailed comparison of the two texts, these considerable discrepancies indicate that *Shōmonki* has two very different textual traditions.[11]

In contrast to *Shimpukuji-bon*, *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* is written in a rather unrestrained *gyōsho* (cursive) hand that displays considerable skill.[12] Like *Shimpukuji-bon*, it has punctuation marks, *kaeriten*, *on* and *kun* readings, and *okurigana*, apparently inserted by three different hands. The text contains many erroneous characters, as well as editorial revisions and corrections written in between the lines. In Yamada's opinion, the rough quality of the text, as compared to the more polished appearance of *Shimpukuji-bon*, may indicate that it is the more ancient of the two manuscripts, perhaps being a very old text of *Shōmonki* in the early stages of revision. Yamada suggests, moreover, that *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* was one of the texts that the *Shimpukuji-bon* scribe used when preparing his copy of *Shōmonki*. First, he claims that in many cases the scribe incorporated the interlinear additions and revisions found in *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* and eliminated some of the redundancies, thus producing an improved version of the narrative.

Further, Yamada observes that *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* contains two-character expressions where the other text has single-character ones, the implication being that the *Shimpukuji-bon* scribe shortened the longer compounds found in *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* in the process of writing his copy of the text. According to Yamada, the Chinese used in *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* is more irregular in its syntax than that in *Shimpukuji-bon*, a fact that in his view may indicate the greater

[10] Oda (3), p. 35.
[11] Yamada Tadao (1), p. 2.
[12] Yamada Tadao (1), p. 2.

antiquity of the former. Yamada has also compared the calligraphy, ink, and paper used in both texts, and on the basis of the accumulated evidence, concludes that *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* was written 'ten years or several decades' before the other text, possibly 'not very long after the original *Shōmonki* was composed.'[13]

In recent years, Ryū Eiji has challenged the conclusion that *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* is the older text, calling into question both the accuracy of Yamada's findings and the linguistic assumptions underlying his interpretation of the data. Ryū clearly demonstrates that many claims concerning one or other of the texts are in fact true of both; each text seems to eliminate redundancies found in the other, for example, and both texts—not only *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*—have occasional gaps or missing lines that the other version seems to fill in.[14] Ryū argues, moreover, that many of Yamada's data do not provide valid or convincing evidence for establishing *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* as the older text. He cites as an example Yamada's claim that the Chinese of *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* deviates from the rules of proper syntax more than that of *Shimpukuji-bon* and the fact that it tends to use two-character compounds where the other text employs one-character words.[15]

Ryū is the first scholar to have held up for scrutiny Yamada's theory that *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* is the older of the texts, and his work has opened the way for future research into the problem of which is the more faithful transmission of the non-extant original version. Resolution of the question of the relative age of the two manuscripts must await a closer examination of all the data produced by the two scholars and the linguistic principles underlying their interpretation of those data.

The Abridged Texts

There are a number of extant abridged versions of *Shōmonki* dating from the Edo period, the earliest being *Shōmon Ryakki*, also called *Hōsa Bunko-bon*, which is probably a seventeenth-century manuscript. Eight other principal abridged texts, directly or indirectly related to *Shōmon Ryakki*, have come down to the present time, but these all date from the mid-Edo period or later.[16] The abridged

[13] Yamada Tadao (2), pp. 55–59, and Yamada Tadao (1), pp. 2 & 4.

[14] Ryū (1), pp. 56–60, and Ryū (2), p. 60.

[15] Ryū (1), pp. 58, 66 & 68, and Ryū (2), p. 60.

[16] For bibliographical information on each of the abridged texts, see Yamada Tadao (2), pp. 9–38.

texts might have been prepared as extended captions for picture scrolls or books, but nothing certain is known about the circumstances of their compilation. Although pre-Edo abridged texts of *Shōmonki* have not survived, it is quite possible that they existed even in very early times.

All the abridged texts are quite brief, being about one-fifth of the length of *Shimpukuji-bon*. The manner of abridgment has yet to be carefully analyzed, but in general these texts omit some dates and surnames, abbreviate place-names and names of offices, and eliminate many of the anecdotal allusions and rhetorical flourishes of *Shōmonki*'s prose. Sometimes the subject of one sentence and the predicate of another are artificially joined, altering the meaning of the original text. Nonetheless, the abridged versions are useful, both in correcting some of the orthographical errors found in the two principal texts and assisting in the reconstruction of damaged or missing parts of *Shōmonki*, such as the introductory portion that both *Shimpukuji-bon* and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* lack.

In 1956 Yamada Tadao made the only detailed study to date of the relationship between the two principal texts and the abridged versions of *Shōmonki*. He concluded that the abridgments tend to follow *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* rather than *Shimpukuji-bon*, although they do not generally incorporate the interlinear revisions and additions found in the former. He also observed that in some places the abridged texts appear to have followed some other unknown version of *Shōmonki* rather than *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*.[17] Ryū Eiji's more recent research on the relationship between the principal texts and the abridged versions casts some doubt on Yamada's findings, raising the possibility that neither of the principal texts is especially closely related to the abridged works and that the latter were perhaps based upon some other non-extant version of *Shōmonki*.[18] Further study remains to be done on these textual relationships as well as on such matters as the techniques used in the abridgment process and the textual interrelationships of the various abridged works themselves.

Dating

As mentioned above, near the end of *Shimpukuji-bon* there appears the notation, 'Recorded during the Sixth Month, Tengyō 3 [940].'

[17] Yamada Tadao (2), pp. 42 & 43.

[18] Ryū (1), pp. 51–58. Since Ryū's comparison of the various texts is based on only one section of *Shōmonki*, Masakado's letter to Tadahira, his findings are not conclusive.

Although there has been a long tradition supporting the theory that this date marks the end of the *Shimpukuji-bon* version of *Shōmonki* and signifies the time when the original text was composed,[19] in recent decades some scholars have raised the possibility that the date applies not to the entire *Shōmonki* narrative but instead to Masakado's message from hell found at the end of the text immediately preceding the date notation.

In 1959, Kawaguchi Hisao advanced the view that the date refers only to the message and was fictitiously appended to it by the author. Kawaguchi speculated that the *Shōmonki* text itself was written 'about ten years after the suppression of the uprising', not in 940.[20] Although this theory has not won wide acceptance among historians, it has enjoyed some support from literature specialists, including Kajihara and Ryū.[21] In 1979, Nagazumi Yasuaki challenged the Kawaguchi analysis, making a new and convincing case for accepting the Sixth Month of Tengyō 3 as the date of *Shōmonki*'s completion.

In the first place, Nagazumi pointed out that the phrase 'recorded during the Sixth Month . . .' would be too imprecise a way of dating a short message that was presumably delivered at a particular time on a particular day. Further, the message was supposedly delivered orally by a messenger from the underworld; it was not presented in writing as the word 'recorded' would seem to indicate. Also, Nagazumi points out that if the date was really meant to be associated with the message it would have been attached to it directly and not separated from it by the sentence, 'The message from Masakado's spirit is as stated above.' Thus, in Nagazumi's opinion, there are three sound reasons to reject this notation as the date of the message and to take it instead as the date of the completion of the text.[22]

One further possibility is that the phrase 'recorded during the Sixth Month . . .' was intended to indicate the date when the message was put into writing, rather than the date when it was orally delivered. This would explain the use of the term 'recorded'. Even

[19] For example, Matsumoto, p. 160; Hoshino, p. 7; Haruta, pp. 134–36; Okada (1), p. 11; Takahashi Teiichi, p. 65; Nagazumi (5), p. 45.

[20] Kawaguchi (1), p. 461. Kawaguchi was influenced by the earlier writings of Sakamoto Tarō, who broke with tradition when he proposed (in Sakamoto Tarō, p. 103) that *Shōmonki* was written not a few months after the end of the uprising as the date notation suggests but 'a good many years afterward'.

[21] Kajihara (7), II, p. 365, and Ryū (1), p. 67.

[22] Nagazumi (5), pp. 44–45.

in this case, however, it remains unclear why the scribe did not record both the month and day when the message was recorded, as is seen, for example, in the case of Masakado's letter to Tadahira that is precisely dated with day, month, and year. In conclusion, it is difficult to accept the Kawaguchi hypothesis that the date notation applies to the message from hell, whether as an indication of the time of its oral delivery or as the date when it was put into writing.

Other items of textual evidence have been adduced in support of the view that *Shōmonki* was written in the Sixth Month of Tengyō 3 rather than years after the suppression of the uprising as Kawaguchi and others have conjectured. Haruta Takayoshi points out, for instance, that the narrative contains a number of errors and inconsistencies that, in his view, are due to the author's haste in writing the text under less than ideal conditions in the wake of the Masakado Uprising. For example, the dates of Emperor Suzaku's coming-of-age ceremony and the general amnesty of Jōhei 7 (937) are both given incorrectly, as also is the rank received by Sadamori when he was promoted in the Third Month of Tengyō 3.[23] Also, Yoshikane's death is noted in two places with a different date in either case.[24] Such errors might not have occurred had the author been preparing his narrative some years after these events when there would have been a better opportunity to gather accurate information and to organize it more carefully.[25]

Another point supporting the acceptance of the Sixth Month of Tengyō 3 as the date when *Shōmonki* was originally completed is that the latest dated event in the narrative is Tengyō 3.4.25 and there is no allusion to any event known to have occurred after the Sixth Month of that year. Thus, although the text mentions the promotion of Sadamori, Tsunemoto, and Hidesato on Tengyō 3. 3.9, it makes no reference to Hidesato's prestigious appointment to the governorship of Shimotsuke in the Eleventh Month of that year or of his receiving a grant of land as a reward in the Seventh Month of Tengyō 10 (947), both of which events are known from independent sources.[26] Even more significant is the fact that *Shōmonki*

[23] Haruta, p. 135.

[24] See pp. 98 & 103, below.

[25] Stramigioli (2), pp. 79–80, speculates that *Shōmonki* was written little by little as events unfolded, and that the disorganization, errors, and inconsistencies, especially prominent in the second half of the text, are due to the author's pressing circumstances and bewildered state of mind at the time of writing.

[26] Haruta, pp. 135–36.

says nothing about the Sumitomo Uprising, a major disturbance put down in Tengyō 4 (941). Had the author been writing a decade or more after the suppression of the Masakado Uprising, some of these events would surely have been mentioned. In conclusion, the absence of anything in the narrative indicating that the story was composed after the Sixth Month of Tengyō 3 corroborates the view that this notation was intended as a terminal date for the completion of the original *Shōmonki*.

Authorship

The authorship of *Shōmonki* has been one of the most widely examined questions in the scholarship concerning this work. Although *Shōmonki* is anonymous, a few general observations based on evidence contained in the text may be made concerning the author's background and circumstances when the story was written. First, in all likelihood the writer was an educated male, since the language used in the text is a form of Chinese.[27] With few exceptions, women did not use Chinese in literary writings at that time. Second, the author's reference to himself in the closing line of the text as someone 'from the provinces' can be interpreted to mean either that he was born in the provinces (as opposed to the region of the capital) or was living there at the time of writing. The prevalent view among *Shōmonki* scholars today is that not only was the text written at a place distant from the court but its author was probably living in one of the Bandō provinces when he composed the work.[28]

Kajihara proposes that the author's anonymous reference to himself as someone from the provinces is simply a gesture of humility and need not be taken literally.[29] But even if this piece of textual evidence is excluded, there are other features of the narrative that support the view that *Shōmonki* was written in the provinces. First, the author seems to have been sympathetic at heart toward Masakado; although he becomes somewhat more critical toward the end of the text, he is unwilling to place all the blame for the uprising on Masakado:

> All in all, the fact that Masakado lost his honor and his life was really due to the schemes of the provisional governor of Musashi, Prince Okiyo, and the vice-governor of Hitachi, Fujiwara no Harumochi. How sad to think of Masakado's pathetic fall from grace

[27] The language of *Shōmonki* is discussed in Chapter Three, pp. 53–62, below.

[28] Nagazumi (5), pp. 49–51; Kitayama (2), pp. 177–80; Stramigioli (2), pp. 80–81; Matsumoto, pp. 174–75; Nakada, pp. 408–11; Kajihara (9), pp. 42–43.

[29] Kajihara (9), p. 37.

> and lamentable end! He was like fine ripened grain that suddenly withers just as it is nearing maturity, or the full moon that is prematurely dimmed by obscuring clouds just when it shines most brightly. (p. 132)

In the aftermath of so grave a challenge to imperial sovereignty, it is difficult to imagine that an author at the court would have held so charitable a view of Masakado. Furthermore, had he been residing in the capital, where Masakado's activities were viewed with both shock and horror, it is doubtful whether he would have felt disposed to devote such a large portion of the narrative—half the text, in fact—to what is clearly a sympathetic, at times even sentimental, description of Masakado's earlier years from 931 to 938 before he became a rebel.

Further evidence that the author was near to the scene of events may be found in the nature of the subject matter itself. He describes private family affairs and minor incidents of the sort that would probably not have been mentioned in official records and that in all likelihood would have been known only to an interested local resident. He mentions, for example, Masakado's attack of beriberi, the rape of Sadamori's wife, and the activities of the lowly carrier, Koharumaru, who spied on Masakado. Also, *Shōmonki* assigns little space to description of events taking place in the capital.[30] Masakado's period of residence there, 936–937, is described in a vague and sketchy way considering the length of his stay. Later in the story, little information is provided about the reaction of the court to the news of Masakado's rebellion and the measures undertaken to prepare the city for a possible attack. This lack of detailed coverage of important events in the capital during the years covered in the narrative strongly suggests that the author was living in the distant provinces at the time and did not have access to complete information.

Further, the author makes frequent use of animal imagery and earthy similes that imbue the work with a rustic, provincial coloring. This may mean that he was living in a place removed from the ethos of Heian court society, where a premium was placed on observing proper decorum in literary expression and where inelegant images such as 'worms in the pit of a latrine', p. 127, below, were shunned. In addition, the intensity of the language used in *Shōmonki* conveys a sense of the author's closeness to the subject: it is not the writing of a detached commentator narrating events simply for

[30] Nakada, pp. 409–10.

the record. The impression is given that the author saw many of the happenings with his own eyes and that his sympathy for the helpless victims of war is genuine and deeply felt. Indeed, the poignancy and sense of immediacy characterizing the portrayal of human suffering make *Shōmonki* unusual among war tales.

The foregoing evidence strongly suggests that the author was living away from the capital, probably somewhere in the east, when he composed *Shōmonki*, but the question of his social status or occupation remains unresolved. The presence of Buddhist terms and sentiments has led some scholars to speculate that the author was a priest.[31] While conceding that he may have had 'some connection with the Buddhist establishment', Kajihara points out that in fact no more than about ten Buddhist expressions are found in the text. He concludes from this that the Buddhist element is not sufficiently pervasive to convince us that the author was a cleric.[32] It has also been suggested that the writer might have been a government official who had left public service and taken holy orders,[33] a compelling hypothesis given his manifestly superficial use of Buddhist thought.

The author's apparent access to government records as well as his political sentiments and respect for the law suggest that he may indeed have been an official, either in district or provincial government. A recent study has drawn attention to the striking similarities between *Shōmonki* and a document titled *Owari no Kuni Gunji Hyakushō-ra no Gebumi*, dated 988.[34] Not only are the expressions and vocabulary of these two texts similar, in some cases even identical, but the political sentiments expressed by their respective authors reflect the same basic dissatisfaction over the distress of the peasantry and

[31] As many as seven different 'Buddhist priest' theories of authorship have been proposed to date, and these are summarized in Kajihara (7), II, pp. 383–89. Some scholars speculate that the priest in question lived in the east, while others argue that he was probably residing in the capital when he wrote *Shōmonki*. Still others conjecture that he was traveling between the eastern provinces and the capital as the text was being written.

[32] Kajihara (9), pp. 38–39.

[33] Hayashi (3), pp. 35–36.

[34] Kaga, pp. 31–36. The work is an anonymous thirty-one-article document protesting the illegal and rapacious acts committed by the governor of Owari, Fujiwara no Motonaga. It was probably drafted by low-ranking provincial officials and scribes in cooperation with district magistrates and wealthy cultivators, the latter two groups providing the main incentive for the protest. Kitayama (1), pp. 230–33.

the corrupt practices of high-ranking government officials.[35] For this reason, it has been conjectured that, like the drafters of *Owari Gebumi*, the author of *Shōmonki* was somehow involved in local government.[36] Given his proficiency in writing *kiroku-tai*, or documentary-style variant Chinese, it may be further speculated that his duties were scribal, requiring the writing and handling of official documents.

The reader is left with a clear impression of the author's values and beliefs. His views, often put into the mouths of the leading characters, emphasize the importance of filial piety, the preservation of family ties, and honest, ethical living, as the following excerpts reveal:

> Each death from an enemy arrow meant the unforeseen severance of the bond between father and son; flight without one's shield meant an unexpected separation from one's spouse. (p. 76)

> [Sadamori] reasoned, he had a widowed mother at home, and who was there but her children to look after her? And as for the many family lands, who else but he could manage them? (p. 78)

> One should . . . strive to lead an upright life and never steal. (p. 96)

> There is no more grievous way to lose one's honorable name and all there is to gain in life than to commit wrongdoing. (pp. 95–96)

As is evident from the last quotation, the author placed a high value on preserving personal honor. In discussing Masakado's death, he laments, 'His excessive crimes caused him to forfeit his good reputation . . . and the retribution for his . . . waywardness was dishonor that lingered long after his death,' (p. 137). He further cautions, 'If a person incurs shame in this life, there can be no honor after death,' (p. 140). In the author's opinion, one means of achieving personal honor was government service, the coveted course of ambitious men. Sadamori, *Shōmonki*'s model bureaucrat, often expresses this view:

> Sadamori believed that . . . he ought to return to public service in the capital and make the utmost effort to win promotion in his work. (p. 78)

[35] Pairs of phrases from both texts in which the expressions or wording is similar or virtually identical are listed in Kaga, pp. 32–34, and Kajihara (9), pp. 41–42.

[36] Kajihara (9), p. 42, and Kitayama (2), p. 179.

> [Sadamori thought to himself that] in order to rise in the world and cultivate virtue, nothing would be better . . . than to render faithful service at court. (p. 95)

The author's high esteem for public service may also be glimpsed in the passage, 'Masakado had built up a splendid record of service in the capital bureaucracy, and his reputation for loyalty and trustworthiness would have resounded through history,' (p. 132). In *Shōmonki*, 'public' (or official) and 'private' are invariably contrasted in the context of good and evil,[37] a fact that underscores the author's respect for public authority and his strong disapproval of those who flout the law in their pursuit of private gain:

> Heedless of public authority, [Haruaki] willfully committed acts of savage evil, and in his private life he tyrannized the people of the province. (p. 104)

> Who could have foreseen that a small transgression left unrectified would bring about a situation so disastrous, or that Masakado would try to extend his private influence in order to usurp official authority? (p. 131)

But the author was not blind to the abuses committed by provincial officials themselves and was keenly aware of the miserable living conditions prevailing in the Bandō provinces, where such abuses were most flagrant. Writing in language that suggests that he had observed the deprivation at firsthand, he states:

> Those two leaders, Okiyo and Tsunemoto, worked together like a pair of chopsticks, scheming to break the bones of the common people and squeeze the oil from their flesh. . . . From just a glance at the conditions of deprivation in the province [of Musashi], it was evident that the people were greatly suffering. (pp. 100–01)

> Even a glance at the conditions there would show that nowhere in the world were turmoil and destitution more extreme than in Shimotsuke. (p. 110)

This state of 'turmoil and destitution' in Shimotsuke was seen by the author as a manifestation of man's degeneracy in the *mappō* age, the Latter Age of Buddhist Law. The *mappō* outlook is expressed as follows in the speech of the governor of Shimotsuke as he reflected upon Masakado's takeover of that province:

> Times change and society is transformed; the world no longer observes the laws of morality. Goodness yields before the forces of

[37] This observation was first made in Kobayashi Yasuharu (1), p. 80.

> evil, and Buddha and the gods lack the power to remedy the situation. Oh, the pity of it all! (p. 109)

The text concludes with an even more explicit statement by the author on the malaise and degeneracy of the times. He declares, 'Strife prevails on earth and evil is rampant. Among different people and different minds you find the desire to fight and the desire to avoid conflict,' (p. 140). Although the pessimistic outlook implied by these remarks cannot be said to influence *Shōmonki* as a whole, the author's sensitivity to human suffering and his abhorrence of war are nonetheless evident in many passages. The description of the aftermath of the battle at Hitachi provincial offices exemplifies this attitude:

> Women . . . suffered the shame of being roughly stripped naked; both monks and laymen . . . were brutally beaten to the point of death. . . . Monks and nuns from the state-sponsored temples begged lowly soldiers to spare their ephemeral lives, and the few gentlemen and ladies who had managed to survive were made to suffer cruel humiliation. (pp. 106–07)

One salient feature of the narration of battles in *Shōmonki* is that the descriptions of human suffering caused by war are always far more detailed and emotional in tone than the accounts of the battles themselves, which are sketched only in the barest outline. The author was less interested in the activities and accomplishments of men at war than in the impact of war upon the innocent. For example, in the case of the battle fought in Hitachi in 939, there is only one line in the original text dealing with the fighting itself but ten lines of commentary devoted to the aftermath of the battle and the suffering of the innocent (p. 106). Moreover, when killings occur in *Shōmonki*, they are never graphically described. Even at the climax when Masakado dies, we are spared the gory details; instead, the author dignifies his death by enshrouding it in an air of mythic unreality: 'Struck by a stray arrow from one of the gods, Masakado perished all alone like Ch'ih Yu after fighting his last battle on the "fields of Cho-lu",' (p. 131). The sensitivity and restraint shown by the author in his depiction of war and death imbue his account with an understated eloquence uncommon in the *gunkimono* genre.

The author's aversion for violence is reiterated: 'One of the principles of human society is that since people dread death they should never go to war,' (p. 140). Although his motives for writing *Shōmonki* are not explicitly stated in the conclusion or elsewhere in the text, one is left with the impression that he intended Masakado's story to

serve as a warning tract to others who might be tempted to use violent means to achieve fortune and power.

The Notes

Shōmonki contains twenty-eight notes interspersed throughout the text. In the present translation they are set in smaller type in brackets to distinguish them from the main narrative. The notes may be categorized as follows: one note providing *on* and *kun* readings for characters appearing in the text; four giving *kun* readings only; eleven explaining literary or historical allusions; three commenting on the meaning of difficult sentences; three simple definitions of terms; two identifying words as people's names or the names of provinces; and four giving supplementary information on events narrated in the text.[38] Although some scholars have expressed the belief that all the notes were written by the author of *Shōmonki*, little evidence has been offered in support of this claim.[39] A few notes give the impression of having been supplied by the original author, for they offer the sort of information and insights that he would have been in the best position to provide, but most seem to have been added by a later commentator.

As regards those notes that have the greatest probability of being the work of the author, the following will serve as an example:

> As for Yoshikane's spy Koharumaru, Heaven soon visited its punishment upon him; his misdeeds were found out, and he was captured and killed on the 3rd day, First Month, Jōhei 8. (p. 95)

The note reads as though it were an integral part of the narrative rather than an extraneous interpolation made by another hand. It provides supplementary information about the minor figure Koharumaru that only an interested and well-informed person such as the author would have been likely to know. Another note of a similar sort:

> There is a saying that a man of mean standing moves at the heels of those who are highly placed and that a weak man is dependent

[38] Although *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* and *Shimpukuji-bon* have almost identical notes, the above listing is based on the latter text, which is more complete.

[39] On the notes of *Shōmonki*, see Kajihara (9), pp. 39–40; Okada (1), p. 11; and Ambe, p. 25. These scholars attribute the notes to the author of *Shōmonki* without offering any proof or even considering the possibility that some of them might have been supplied by a later annotator.

Kobayashi Yoshinori, pp. 253–54, speculates unconvincingly that 'the notes were present in *Shōmonki* from the start because *Shimpukuji-bon* and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* both have them.'

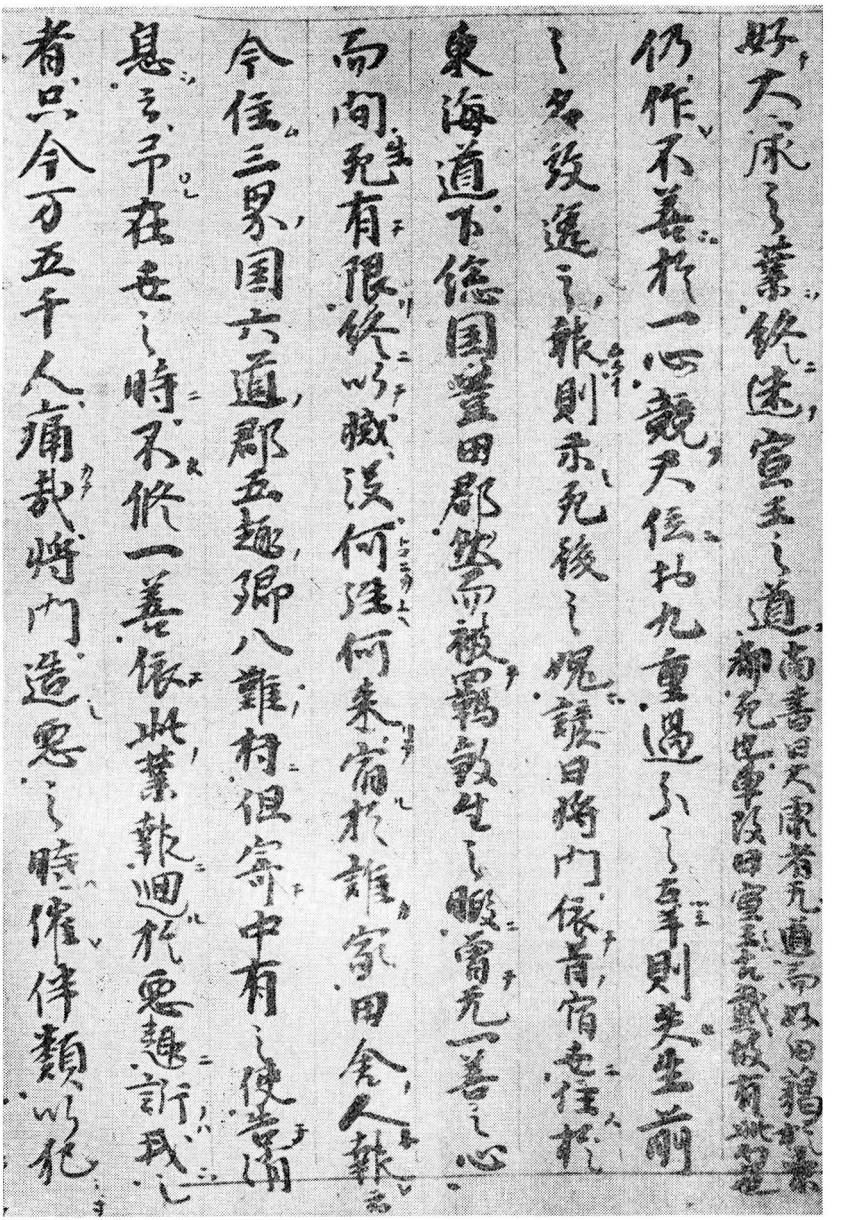
> on the powerful. Thus, Sadamori thought it best to follow his superiors respectfully. (p. 78)

Here it appears that the commentator is trying to analyze Sadamori's reasons for seeking reconciliation with Masakado; again, the original author would have been in the best position to provide this kind of parenthetical insight into Sadamori's behavior.

As for notes that the author probably did not write, it is likely that those providing erroneous information—a mistaken identification of a textual source or of a person named in the narrative—were inserted later. Although the author could have been responsible for some of the minor errors, a number of the notes are so grossly erroneous as to appear to be the gratuitous addition of a later, ill-informed annotator. For example, following the sentence, 'Thus, a man who was like Chu Yün was charged with the task of "cutting off the head of the big whale",' (p. 131) a note states, 'According to *Han shu*, Chu Yün was an evil man. . . .' The Chu Yün charged with the task of cutting off the head of the 'big whale' was a Chinese loyalist, a defender of the throne. The person who identified Chu Yün as an 'evil man' in the note could hardly have been the same man who spoke of Chu Yün, the loyalist, in the text.

As for the notes whose authorship is indeterminate, two types are especially common. The first provides readings for words in the text or identifies a term as a place-name or person's name. In the other category are the lengthy annotations explaining literary and historical allusions, as exemplified by the notes found on pp. 93–94 of the translation. Although some scholars argue that these notes were provided by the original author, who anticipated that his readers would need assistance in reading the difficult language of the text, it is just as likely that this information was supplied by a later commentator or scribe, who wished to clarify the points that he perceived to be the most difficult for the reader.

In summary, the two principal early texts of *Shōmonki* are called *Shimpukuji-bon* and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, the former dated 1099 and the latter probably written during the tenth or eleventh century. Abridged texts compiled in the Edo period help to fill in lacunae in these two sources. The original work appears to have been composed soon after the suppression of the Masakado Uprising in 940. Most likely the author was an educated man, possibly with experience of government service, who lived, at least at the time of compilation, in one of the Bandō provinces. In much of the narrative he shows marked sympathy toward Masakado and expresses anguish at the suffering of innocent people in time of war. Interspersed



A page from the collotype reproduction of the Shimpukuji-bon text (corresponding to pp. 137–38 of the translation), showing, lower right, the notes written in two columns and with smaller characters.

in the narrative are twenty-eight notes supplying a variety of information; some of them appear to have been provided by the original author, while others are probably the work of later copyists or commentators.

Chapter Three

Language, Style, and Literary Tradition

Language

Shōmonki is written in *hentai kambun*, 'variant Chinese', a now defunct, hybrid literary language combining Chinese and Japanese elements of grammar and sentence structure, vocabulary, and character usage. *Hentai kambun*, or *waka kambun*, 'Japanized Chinese', needs to be distinguished from so-called *jun kambun*, 'pure Chinese', also called *seikaku no kambun*, 'orthodox Chinese'. Whereas *jun kambun*, whether written by Chinese or Japanese, is readily understandable to native Chinese speakers, *hentai kambun* can be fully comprehended only by readers familiar with both Chinese and Japanese. The term *kambun*, 'Chinese', is often used somewhat ambiguously and imprecisely to refer to both orthodox and variant forms of Chinese and is therefore best avoided in discussions of language.

The salient features of *hentai kambun* as seen in *Shōmonki* include non-adherence to Chinese syntax and grammar;[1] the inclusion of binomial expressions invented by the Japanese;[2] the usage of Chinese words different from that of native Chinese writings;[3] the inclusion

[1] An example of this is verb-object inversion, where the object precedes the verb following Japanese word order, as in the following two examples (object is underlined, verb is underlined twice): 将門名曰新皇 (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 35), '[They] named Masakado "New Emperor".' 妻子供隠宿幸島郡葦津江辺 (*Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, p. 9), '[Masakado] hid his wife and child in the vicinity of Ashizu Inlet in Sashima District.'

Japanese grammatical constructions such as '. . . *no ue ni*' (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 4, l. 5), meaning 'in addition to', are also common in *hentai kambun* as are a number of subordinate-clause constructions employing 之 and a temporal expression, as in 之間, 'while . . . ', and 之程, 'during . . . ' See, for example, *Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 2, l. 5, and p. 4, l. 3.

[2] Examples include such compounds as *banrui*, 'allies in battle'; *jibun*, 'oneself'; and *henji*, 'reply'. *Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., pp. 1, 26, & 30.

[3] For example, 融, read *kayou*, 'to commute' (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 16), means 'to melt', 'to pass', 'bright', and so forth in traditional Chinese use. Also, *kudan* [*no*] 件, 'the aforementioned [person]' (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 36), means 'to divide', 'to distinguish', 'an article' in Chinese.

of Japanese honorific expressions and native words (sometimes spelled out using characters phonetically to represent individual syllables);[4] and a high incidence of *itaiji*, or variant characters.[5]

Hentai kambun was widely used by the Japanese male intelligentsia from the seventh to the twentieth century for court records and legal documents as well as diaries, biographies, literary pieces, and correspondence. Despite the lengthy duration and broad extent of its use, *hentai kambun* has been the object of little linguistic research and remains virtually inaccessible to all but a small number of specially trained scholars.

The Japanese began learning to read and write Chinese from immigrant Korean teachers around the fifth century, some two or three centuries before a system for writing their own language was fully developed. By the seventh century, Chinese was being used by Japanese officialdom with considerable skill. Chinese studies in Japan and the ability of bureaucrats and scholars to compose in Chinese reached their height in the early ninth century, only to decline with the termination of missions to China in 894. Thereafter the Chinese language written by the Japanese became increasingly corrupted by Japanese words and constructions, and 'variant Chinese' emerged as a separate linguistic entity. During the Heian period, *hentai kambun* achieved a degree of uniformity of vocabulary and phraseology, and reached maturity as a written style. Moreover, it gradually encroached upon orthodox Chinese as the language most often used in public documents, largely because of its facility and practicality as compared to pure Chinese. Whereas the latter did not allow, for example, the use of colloquial Japanese words and honorific expressions, these could be freely incorporated into *hentai kambun* prose.

The term *hentai kambun* today refers to a broad spectrum of

[4] Japanese honorific expressions include items such as *-ru/raru* and *-tatematsuru*, both of which appear frequently throughout the text. Native Japanese words include examples such as *kuchioshi* 口惜, 'disappointing, unfortunate' (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 15), written here with *ateji* (rebus orthography), and *ajikinaku* 阿知奈支久 (from *ajikinashi*), 'disconsolately, helplessly' (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 5), which is spelled out using *magana* (phonograms), characters employed for their phonetic value only. *Magana* are also used to record Japanese poetry in *Shōmonki*—see *Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 44.

[5] *Itaiji* are characters not written in the standard or orthodox form. Almost three hundred different *itaiji* are used in *Shōmonki*, such as 𠆢 for 召, 𠂉 for 亡, and 亰 for 京. A complete list is given in Koten Isan no Kai, *Shōmonki*, pp. 396–98.

pseudo-Chinese styles. These range from the only slightly ungrammatical and lexically impure classical Chinese, such as that found in *Shōmonki* or *Nihon Ryōiki*, ca. 820, to a more naturalized style that has a large admixture of Japanese words and locutions, as exemplified by the courtier diary *Midō Kampakuki*, written by Fujiwara no Michinaga, 966–1027. The *hentai kambun* generally used in diaries such as *Midō Kampakuki* and records from the mid- to late-Heian and Kamakura periods, ca. eleventh to fourteenth centuries, is often referred to as *kiroku-tai*, 'the documentary style', and is thought to represent one of the most fully Japanized forms of this hybrid style. *Kiroku-tai* was in fact perceived by its users to be a special kind of literary Japanese that, while imitating Chinese in its outward appearance and basic word-order, was written to be read as though it were Japanese. The conversion of *kiroku-tai* into Japanese has long been accomplished by an indigenous system of marginal notations and symbols, which enables a trained reader to rearrange quickly the word order while at the same time supplying Japanese glosses and verbal inflections, a process called *kundoku*. Like other *hentai kambun* texts, *Shōmonki* was probably read from the time of its composition with the use of the *kundoku* technique.

Parallel Prose

Shōmonki intermittently employs the Chinese parallel prose (*p'ien wen*) style for rhetorical effect and is the longest *hentai kambun* literary piece to make use of this technique.[6] Just under one-third of the *Shōmonki* narrative is written in parallel prose of one form or another. This mostly occurs where emotional or tragic subjects are described; for example, the pain of human suffering, the pathos and evil of war, and Masakado's outrageous acts and untimely death. These 'purple patches' in the narrative have the effect of slowing down its progress, allowing the author to pause to reflect upon

[6] *P'ien wen* is characterized by 'a somewhat florid and artificial style, an emphasis on verbal parallelism, attention to tonal euphony, occasional rhyme, and frequency of allusion.' Hightower (2), p. 38. *P'ien wen* is often referred to as *ssu-lu-wen* (J. *shirokubun*) because of its tendency to use four- and six-character phrases as the predominant metrical unit. The lines of the couplet might each contain four or six characters, or alternatively each line might contain eight characters arranged into a four-four pattern, or ten characters arranged into a four-six or six-four pattern. Hightower (1), p. 109.

Many of the couplets in *Shōmonki* are the double-line type in which each line is sub-divided into two phrases. See p. 58, n. 12, below, for an example of a double-line couplet having an unusual four-five pattern in each of its lines.

events that he felt were particularly stirring or significant. The unusual piling up of images, figures of speech, and literary and historical allusions in these passages gives evidence of a conscious literary effort that has been criticized by some Japanese scholars as being amateurish or pedantic.[7]

The *p'ien wen* style, an elegant and formal manner of writing, was much in vogue in China during the late Six Dynasties, 220–589, and early T'ang periods. In Japan, where Chinese literary trends and concepts of style were influential among court literati, *p'ien wen* reached the height of its popularity in the first half of the ninth century, declining gradually from the end of that century but retaining its prestige and preeminence as the formal Chinese style used by the Heian court.[8] It was employed not only in the Chinese prose and poetry anthologies compiled by the Japanese but also in temple correspondence and government documents such as edicts, memorials, and elegies. These were drawn up either in ornate *ssu-lu-wen*, 'the style of fours and sixes', or else in a quasi-*p'ien wen* style that contained a large and conspicuous component of parallel phrases in the four-six character meter.

Early in the T'ang dynasty, there arose a concerted critical reaction, for both artistic and philosophical reasons, against the use of parallel prose. Some early T'ang historians rejected *p'ien wen* altogether as 'decadent and unsuited to the properly didactic function of literature.'[9] Under the leadership of Han Yü, 768–824, a Confucian and conservative moralist who modeled his own writings on the unadorned free-style prose of pre-Han times, a literary reform movement advocating the adoption of *ku-wen*, or 'ancient-style prose', was begun. Han Yü's vigorous attempts at reform were not long lasting, however, and the use of parallel prose managed to survive the *ku-wen* movement. In fact, parallel prose regained its dominance toward the end of the T'ang, displacing *ku-wen* in official and formal use until the Sung, 960–1279, when the *ku-wen* movement was revived and parallel prose was displaced by a more practical style in all types of prose except certain kinds of documentary writing.[10]

Japan indirectly felt the influence of Han Yü's reforming spirit through the immensely popular works of such writers as Po Chü-i,

[7] Takahashi Teiichi, pp. 66–67, and Murakami, p. 62.
[8] Ōsone (2), pp. 60 & 63.
[9] Hightower (2), p. 72.
[10] Hightower (2), pp. 39 & 73–74.

772–846, and Yüan Chen, 779–831. The influence of Po Chü-i's poetry dramatically altered the style and subject matter of Japanese *kanshi* (Chinese poetry) by helping to popularize less conventional diction and more direct styles of expression. By the time of Sugawara no Michizane, 845–903, statesman and man of Chinese letters, Japanese writers of Chinese prose and poetry were casting off the bonds of Six Dynasties formalism in favor of freer, more practical, and individualistic styles of writing. The Japanese literary genres of Chinese prose that were most strongly influenced by the Chinese reforming influence included personal essays, Buddhist tales, proselytizing literature, and biographies. These genres used direct and readily comprehensible language, and this style became increasingly characteristic of Chinese written by Japanese from the tenth century.

The decline in the use of the parallel-prose style in Japan set in during the latter half of the ninth century and was as much the result of certain historical factors as of the literary influence of the *ku-wen* movement in China. The cessation of diplomatic missions to China in 894, the collapse of the T'ang in 907, and deteriorating relations with Korea encouraged the Japanese to pursue a more independent course. Culturally, Japan was coming of age, gaining confidence in its own artistic traditions and achievements, and showing surprising sophistication in native literary arts such as *waka* (Japanese poetry), which enjoyed a revival in the latter half of the ninth century. As the *waka* tradition began to flourish, Chinese literary studies declined somewhat in prestige among the literati. At the same time, there was a decline in the ability, and the motivation, of the Japanese to adhere to the formal requirements of the parallel-prose style. Thus, from the late-ninth century onward, utilitarian *kiroku-tai* was increasingly employed in place of the parallel prose of former times. This is not to say that the *p'ien wen* style was abandoned completely; *Honchō Monzui*, ca. 1037–1045, an important anthology of Chinese prose and poetry written by Japanese, is a monument to the tenacity of the parallel-prose tradition as an elegant, if impractical, literary medium.

Shōmonki is an interesting transitional piece of writing in that its literary style is a peculiar and uneven mixture of plain *kiroku-tai* and ornate parallel prose. The practice of imposing parallel-prose structure—or what at least passes superficially for parallelism—upon *kiroku-tai* was not uncommon in the writings of Japanese in the ninth and tenth centuries, not only in public correspondence, legal texts,

and government documents, but in literary texts as well.[11] There is little doubt that *Shōmonki* would have been a clearer, more precise historical document had the parallel-prose style not been employed at all, for parallelism, with its tendency to make obscure allusions and employ esoteric vocabulary, sometimes obfuscates historical reality and invites misunderstandings.[12] But *Shōmonki*'s identity as a literary piece is nonetheless based upon the use of this style. The author's unwillingness to adopt a strictly documentary prose style is doubtless a reflection of the conscious literary intent that lay behind the composition of this work.

The parallel prose used in *Shōmonki* deviates from standard Chinese form, as was often the case to varying degrees with parallel prose written in Japan.[13] The author does not follow the rules pertaining to meter, grammatical parallelism, and tonal euphony as generally observed in China. Failure to do so means either that he found it difficult to use this demanding style or that he was indifferent to the exacting standards set by the Chinese. The author's adoption, whether conscious or not, of a freer style of parallel prose enabled him to express himself with greater originality, vigor, and vitality than would have been possible had he tried to stay squarely within the rigid rules of Chinese *p'ien wen*.[14] Let us examine in

[11] *Nihon Ryōiki*, ca. 820, is an interesting example of a *hentai kambun* literary piece that, like *Shōmonki*, uses parallelism intermittently. The introductions to each of its three *maki* (chapters) combine ornate parallel prose and plain *kiroku-tai*.

[12] An example of potential misunderstanding is found in the following parallelism:

Hito no kuchi o motte kairō no tomo o tazuneetari.
Dengen o motte renri no to o toitoreri
以人口尋得偕老之友
以伝言問取連理之徒 (*Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype ed., p. 3).
'Word of mouth helped him to find his beloved spouse,
and news learned at second hand enabled him to discover the whereabouts of his cherished lover.' (p. 77, below)

'Beloved spouse' (*kairō no tomo*) and 'cherished lover' (*renri no to*) are probably used here in poetic variation to refer to Sadamori's wife, although the reader may well be led to believe that the reference is to two different women.

[13] Even in the finest pieces of parallel prose composed by Japanese, such as those that appear in *Honchō Monzui*, grammatical parallelism is not always strictly maintained, nor are the rules of tonal euphony generally observed. For examples of grammatical irregularities, see Kojima, pp. 323, lines 9–10; p. 326, line 6; & p. 332, lines 4–5.

[14] For this point of view, see Kawaguchi (1), pp. 464–65, and Murakami, pp. 54–58.

greater detail the manner in which parallelism is employed in *Shōmonki* so that the unorthodox features of its use may be more clearly demonstrated.

First, there are three general categories of Chinese parallelism: metrical, grammatical, and phonic.[15] Rhyme, alliteration, repetition, and tonal pattern—the characteristics of phonic parallelism[16]—are not employed in *Shōmonki*. Generally speaking, Heian parallel prose did not adhere to the complex rules of tonal prosody developed by Shen Yüeh (441–513), Hsü Ling (507–583), Yü Hsin (513–581), and others. Perhaps the only tonal consideration of the Japanese literati of Heian times was the avoidance of the use of the same category of tone (level/deflected) in the last character of phrases in a couplet, although the author of *Shōmonki* does not display even this minimal degree of attention to tonal patterns.[17]

Metrical parallelism, the first category of parallelism noted above, is characterized by the repetition of a rhythmic pattern in each couplet; that is, the same number of beats, or words, must occur in each line of the couplet. In Heian times, the rule that the number of words in each line be the same was generally upheld, but this cannot be said of the parallel prose in *Shōmonki*. More than twenty percent of the couplets in the work are metrically mismatched, such as a line of four- and six-character phrases matched by one having four and seven. This unevenness is due in many instances to the unnecessary inclusion or the omission of a character, most often 者, 於, or 之, in one line of the couplet. Further, the metrical unit employed in some cases is most unusual. Although fours and sixes are most often used as units of meter, a reflection no doubt of the Chinese preference for this meter, a significant number of couplets in *Shōmonki* are based on irregular units such as threes and sixes or fours and tens. These metrical patterns are rare not only in Chinese Six Dynasties examples but also in Japanese parallel-prose writings contained in collections such as *Honchō Monzui*.

Nor does *Shōmonki* adhere strictly to the requirements of grammatical parallelism. In this respect it shows a particular affinity to the parallel prose written during the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, when less attention was given to maintaining close

[15] Hightower (1), p. 108.

[16] Hightower (1), p. 114.

[17] For the tonal prosody in Heian parallel prose, see Ōsone (1), pp. 13–19, and Ōsone (2), p. 68.

grammatical parallelism than was the case in the Heian age.[18] Grammatical parallelism requires that 'every word in the first line of a couplet be matched by a corresponding word in the second line, reinforcing the metrical repetition with a grammatical repetition of the pattern.'[19] In *Shōmonki*, word-for-word grammatical correspondence is often lacking, this irregularity arising in many cases from the use of Japanese, rather than Chinese, word order in one line of the couplet, as the following example demonstrates:

Okashi aru mo okashi naki mo kunyū o dōhan ni ransu
Nigori aru mo nigori naki mo keii o ichiryū ni hitataku[20]

有犯無犯薫猶乱於同畔
有濁無濁混涇渭於一流

The innocent and the guilty alike shared a common fate, just as fragrant and fetid plants intermingle on the paths between the paddies;
the pure and the tainted alike were merged in suffering, just as the muddy waters of the Ching and the limpid waters of the Wei flow together. (p. 136, below)

Here the verb *ransu* follows its object *kunyū* in the first line in accordance with Japanese subject-object-verb word order, but in the second line the verb *hitataku*, which is synonymous with *ransu*, precedes the object *keii* in accordance with Chinese word order.

Consider also the following case:

Man gosen no kembu wa goshu no kyaku ni ubawarenu
Sambyaku amari no ie no kamado wa horobite ittan no kemuri to naru[21]

万五千之絹布被奪五主之客
三百余之宅烟滅作於一旦之煙

Thousands of bolts of silk were seized by 'the five owners' of all things,
and the smoke from the kitchen fires in more than three hundred homes became the smoke of raging fire in an instant. (p. 106, below)

[18] For irregularities in grammatical parallelism in medieval Japanese parallel prose, see Ōsone (2), pp. 67–68.

[19] Hightower (1), p. 109. Hightower (1), pp. 109–10, also notes that word-for-word grammatical parallelism is not always required: '. . . sometimes it is necessary to substitute the word "lexical" for "grammatical," that is, the correspondence can be purely formal.'

[20] *Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype edition, pp. 53–54.

[21] *Shimpukuji-bon*, collotype edition, p. 31.

Here grammatical parallelism breaks down because *sen*, 'thousand', in the first line, is matched by *amari*, 'more than', in the second, and the single passive verb *ubawarenu*, 'were seized', in the first line is paired with the two active verbs *horobite*, 'perish', and *naru*, 'becomes', in the second. Not only are the lines mismatched in their grammar but there is a lack of metrical symmetry as well. The first line has twelve characters, the second has thirteen; this is because the character 於, here a preposition, is included in the second line but not in the first. All of these discrepancies, both grammatical and metrical, could have been easily remedied by the author had he been concerned with adhering to formal standards of parallel-prose construction. He obviously was not.

Another feature of parallel prose in *Shōmonki* that would not have been admissible in orthodox *p'ien wen* is the use of native Japanese words, or *wago*, and colloquialisms, as illustrated in the following examples from the text:

> Sadamori wore a cloth hat upon his dark hair,
> and had a sedge sash tied around his wisteria-cloth mourning robe.
> (p. 77, below, adapted)

> Those two leaders, Okiyo and Tsunemoto, worked together like a pair of chopsticks, scheming to break the bones of the common people and squeeze the oil from their flesh.
> Their underlings shared in the plunder like a swarm of ants, their minds bent on laying their hands on the loot and stealthily carrying it off. (pp. 100–01, below)

'Sedge sash' (*suge no obi*) and 'wisteria-cloth robe' (*fuji no koromo*, a mourning robe) in the first example are *wago*; the similes 'like chopsticks' (*hashi no gotoki*) and 'like ants' (*ari no gotoki*) and the expression 'squeeze the oil [from their flesh]' (*abura o idasu*) in the second have a rustic, colloquial character that would have been regarded as unseemly in traditional *p'ien wen*, in which elegant diction was de rigueur.

As these quotations show, the author of *Shōmonki* had a penchant for homey images and the unconventional turn of phrase. Men are likened to 'worms in the pit of a latrine' (p. 127), 'hawk[s] leaving the hunter's gauntlet to prey upon pheasants' (p. 95), and 'huge termites of the Bandō' (p. 128); they run 'like whirling wheels' (p. 127) and flee blindly 'like mice unable to find their holes when a cat is on their tails' (p. 95). Much of the appeal of the language in *Shōmonki* indeed derives from the author's down-to-earth perceptions of his subject and his ability to describe the rugged warrior

life in an idiom appropriate to the subject. Language breaks free from both the rules of *p'ien wen* composition and the conventions of courtly decorum, manifesting an original mode of expression, rustic charm, and, above all, a masculine vitality that remained the essence of the *gunkimono* genre.

The Gunkimono Tradition

Shōmonki has the distinction of being the first literary work to focus upon events in the provinces and to deal almost exclusively with the lives of warriors. The appearance of this earliest-known work in the *gunkimono* genre reflected the increasing social and political prominence of the provincial military elite and perhaps also a growing awareness of that class among the Japanese literati. The gradual rise in the popularity and literary influence of war tales over the subsequent five centuries accompanied the growing political power and socio-economic prominence of the military class, whose lifestyle and values the *gunkimono* celebrate.

The genre flourished from the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, slowly declining as a literary form over the following several hundred years. Owing to the directness of their language and the exoteric appeal of their subject matter, the war tales, especially those that were orally recited, achieved a popularity more widespread than any previous form of literature. At the same time, they exerted a profound influence upon other Japanese literary forms, most notably noh, *jōruri*, *otogi-zōshi*, and kabuki.[22] War tales retain their popular appeal even today, promoted in part by the visual media that adapt *gunkimono* for screen and stage. Throughout 1976, the story of Masakado was presented as a television drama by NHK under the title, *Kaze to Kumo to Niji to*, 'Wind, Clouds, and Rainbows', capturing the imagination of millions of Japanese and stimulating the study of *Shōmonki* by both amateur historians and *gunkimono* specialists alike.

[22] Noh is a dramatic form combining chanted text, stylized dance, and music; it reached the height of its popularity and literary development in the Muromachi period. *Jōruri*, the puppet theater, flourished in the Edo period as a popular dramatic form bringing together shamisen music, dramatic narration, and the life-like action of puppets. *Otogi-zōshi* are short stories of the Muromachi period; they are characteristically anonymous and are aimed at a relatively unsophisticated audience. Kabuki is a popular dramatic theater that was extremely popular among townsmen and samurai during the Edo period and retains its appeal even today.

All of the above genres adapted episodes from war tales such as *Heike Monogatari* or from quasi-*gunkimono* works such as *Gikeiki*.

For over sixty years, scholars who have written on the place of *Shōmonki* in Japanese literary history have recognized this work as the fountainhead of the *gunkimono* tradition. As early as 1916, Tsuda Sōkichi observed in a work on Heian court literature and society, 'War tales appear to have originated with *Shōmonki* and *Mutsuwaki*.'[23] In 1932, Igarashi Chikara described *Shōmonki* as 'the first independent war chronicle [*gunki*]', contrasting it with earlier fragmentary writings on war found in such pseudo-historical works as *Kojiki*, 712, and *Nihon Shoki*, 720, and calling it the foundation for the subsequent development of war-tale literature.[24]

Shōmonki's status as 'the father of the war tale'[25] has continued to be recognized by Japanese scholars in recent decades. Describing *Shōmonki* and *Mutsuwaki* as 'germinal works in the war-tale tradition', Komatsu Shigeto identified generic characteristics shared by *Shōmonki*, *Hōgen Monogatari*, and *Heike Monogatari*, and placed these works in a common line of literary descent. He has also grouped *Mutsuwaki* with *Heiji Monogatari* and *Taiheiki* as a literary sub-group within the *gunkimono* genre.[26] Komatsu's attempts to apply the theoretical concept of genre, which had become of great interest to literary academicians, to the study of *gunkimono* was only one of many scholarly efforts to treat the totality of war tales as a literary form.[27]

Western scholarship on *gunkimono* has been fragmentary and scanty, and has not kept abreast of Japanese research in the field. There has been a marked tendency among Western researchers to view the genre narrowly as a literary phenomenon of the middle ages, one that suddenly emerged in a fully mature form from the decades of social upheaval and military strife at the end of the twelfth century. Such a view is found, for example, in William R. Wilson's introduction to his translation of *Hōgen Monogatari*:

> The warrior class in Japan established its dominance in society in the Middle Ages, and sustained this status until modern times. The imperial institution and its administrators, the Court Nobility, were left in an inferior position after a sequence of rebellion, rising, war, and rising, occurring respectively in 1156, 1160, 1180–5, and 1221. Each of these was celebrated in a new form of literature, the

[23] Tsuda, I, p. 490. *Mutsuwaki* is a *gunkimono* dating from the eleventh century.

[24] Igarashi (1), pp. 4–6.

[25] An appelation used in Sakamoto Tarō, p. 105.

[26] Komatsu, pp. 172–73 & 249.

[27] Other important writings on *Shōmonki* and the war-tale genre include Nagazumi (2), and the recent Nagazumi (4) in which the author undertakes a detailed analysis of *Shōmonki*, calling the work 'the point of origin of the tradition'.

> *gunki* or 'military chronicle', distinctive of the period, and these accounts developed through many variants in the next four hundred years. These are the 'Early Period' military chronicles, probably originally written to be read. . . .[28]

It may also be noted that Helen Craig McCullough in her study and translation of *Mutsuwaki* shows a strong reluctance to include that work in the *gunkimono* genre. She writes:

> Can we say . . . that *A Tale of Mutsu* is an early *gunki monogatari*? Such a conclusion would be premature, even though lesser affinities with the genre can also be cited. . . . We shall perhaps be closest to the truth if we think of *A Tale of Mutsu* and the *gunki monogatari* not as ancestor and descendant, but as similar products of a common social background. . . .[29]

Not only does McCullough seem to disqualify *Mutsuwaki* as a genuine war tale but her language suggests that she may also regard *Shōmonki* as a work with even less affinity with the genre than *Mutsuwaki*. In short, the fact that the genre has its origins in *Shōmonki* and endured throughout more than seven centuries of diverse historical conditions has not been acknowledged in Western scholarship.

Although there were probably dozens of war tales written during the tenth and eleventh centuries, only *Shōmonki* and *Mutsuwaki* survive as examples of the early tradition.[30] Today, the best known among hundreds of extant *gunkimono* are *Hōgen Monogatari*, *Heiji Monogatari*, *Heike Monogatari*, and *Taiheiki*, all of which are products of the golden age of the genre, the Kamakura and early Muromachi periods (ca. late twelfth to late fourteenth century). The first three of these works, probably written in the early thirteenth century, deal with the political disturbances and social upheaval in the latter half of the twelfth century that culminated in the establishment of a military government in Kamakura in the 1180s. These texts appeared in numerous successive variant versions during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. *Taiheiki*, the fourth work cited above, describes a series of civil wars fought in the first half of the fourteenth

[28] Wilson, p. v.

[29] McCullough (2), p. 186.

[30] There exist in fact other early military chronicles, such as *Sumitomo Tsuitōki* and *Ōshū Go-sannenki*, both probably dating from the eleventh century, but these works are not usually included among the early *gunkimono* because they lack legendary and literary color and are simply records of military subjugations.

century. The work took shape over many decades, assuming its final form probably in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. Ninety percent of all surviving *gunkimono* date from the Muromachi and early Sengoku periods, 1338–1500, and although none of the best war tales was written after 1400, the genre nonetheless continued well into the Edo period.[31]

The overwhelming majority of the extant *gunkimono* are anonymous works. Many were probably written by low-ranking aristocrats, men not necessarily connected with military affairs in any way. These writers selected, edited, and embellished their materials according to their individual tastes and discretion, and in so doing presented what was no doubt an idealized picture of warrior life colored to some extent by their courtly perspective. Although the authors of war tales rarely explain their motives for writing, their primary intention was probably to record history and preserve it for posterity. *Meitokuki*, composed ca. 1400, is one of the few works in which the author specified his objective, which was 'to leave a record [of events] for future generations.'[32] Later, as some *gunkimono*, such as *Heike Monogatari*, came to be revised and expanded for oral performance, entertainment of the assembled crowd began to take precedence over the faithful presentation of historical fact.[33]

The *gunkimono* primarily dealt with warfare and the life of the warrior class, its military activities, and its code of ethics. In fact, the description of battles is the prime constituent in order for a work to qualify as a genuine *gunkimono*. Legendary stories such as *Gikeiki* and *Soga Monogatari*, in which battle narration is only of secondary importance, are not generally included in the genre. Some *gunkimono*, such as *Heike Monogatari*, narrate events having a national impact and epoch-making significance, but subject matter

[31] 'Ninety percent' is based on Kajihara (2), p. 57. The figure takes into account not only *gunkimono* such as *Taiheiki* but also military chronicles and records possessing little if any literary appeal. Many categories of military chronicles exist: *jitsuroku*, 'factual accounts'; *ichidaiki*, 'biographies'; *gunkōki*, 'records of military merit'; *nendaiki*, 'chronicles'; *kafu*, 'family genealogies', and others.

[32] Tomikura (1), p. 11.

[33] *Heike Monogatari* was probably written originally as a 'pseudo-chronicle' and was later revised by reciters to 'make it more suitable for oral presentation.' This revision entailed the excision or modification of 'record-style sections', augmentation of the legendary element, and even reshaping the characters of people and the events themselves to make the story more appealing. Butler, pp. 6 & 11.

Hōgen Monogatari and *Heiji Monogatari* are believed to have undergone a similar transformation from pseudo-chronicle to recited text as successive variant editions were produced.

of this nature is by no means typical of all the texts, the majority of which are instead concerned with comparatively minor conflicts.

All of the *gunkimono* possess an episodic structure and incorporate a wide variety of material including records and documents, legendary and historical anecdotes, Japanese poetry, and correspondence. But the early *gunkimono*, such as *Shōmonki* and *Mutsuwaki*, have far greater narrative cohesiveness and a simple, more unified story line than the longer works produced in the middle period of the tradition, such as the voluminous *Heike Monogatari* and *Taiheiki*. These latter works can best be described as a collection of loosely knit stories, many of which contain lengthy anecdotal digressions and complex, overlapping events covering many years of history. Out of this welter of events emerges not one hero but many. *Shōmonki*, by contrast, deals with only a few years in the life of one man, Taira no Masakado, narrating his story briskly and economically without much legendary embellishment or digression.

As in the Homeric epics, the martial deeds of war-tale heroes are exceptional but not of a fantastic nature, inspiring a sense of awe, perhaps, but at the same time remaining within the limits of human potential. Courage and selfless devotion to one's superiors as well as filial piety and pride in one's family are important values of the *gunkimono* warrior; when combined with the physical attributes of strength and military prowess, they were seen as the ultimate in human perfection.

Shōmonki stands in contrast to later war tales in that its code of warrior ethics is not fully developed. Its interest in the portrayal of proper samurai demeanor and behavior is weak compared with *Mutsuwaki* and other later works in which the exposition of the code of military conduct is a prominent aspect of the narrative. Moreover, in *Shōmonki*, men are not idealized as warriors to the extent seen in subsequent works. Masakado is shown in a very human but unheroic light when, stricken with beriberi, he is quickly defeated at the battle of Horikoshi Ford (p. 88, below). Later in the story, Sadamori is said to be so distraught over the adversities of his life in the wilds that thoughts of suicide came into his mind (p. 99, below). Such realistic portrayals of men in their moments of weakness and physical infirmity are not characteristic of later tales such as *Heike Monogatari*. In *Heike Monogatari*'s recited textual versions in particular, characters are drawn larger than life as idealized, stereotypic heroes, the embodiment of the Japanese warrior ethic. The *gunkimono* have thus been characterized as 'dramas of political loyalties . . . [in which] each character is significant not for his

emotional life but for his political role and the values which attach to it.'[34] Lacking psychological depth and complexity, the *gunkimono* hero seems to exist solely for the purpose of serving a cause greater than himself.

The war tales that have enjoyed the greatest popularity are those that are preoccupied not with the glory of the victorious but with the fate of the vanquished, whose misfortunes generate much of the drama and pathos of their stories. Further, the authors of the best *gunkimono* did not merely describe the course of a battle in the objective manner of a court record or chronicle but attempted to interpret the significance of the conflict, injecting a critical philosophical element into their narrative. The author of *Shōmonki* observes, for example, that Masakado 'enjoy[ed] doing evil [and] . . . became guilty of crimes' and that 'the burden of his accumulated sins caught up with him . . .' (p. 133, below). He further notes in reference to the uprising that 'plots of this nature have seldom been perpetrated in either past or recent history' and that the 'retribution for [Masakado's] . . . waywardness was dishonor that lingered long after his death' (pp. 136 & 137, below). It is of course true that this critical or philosophical element is by no means pervasive; the author does not express a particular opinion on the nature of Masakado's acts until late in the text. But he does in the end reveal an understanding of the hero's human limitations—foolhardiness and excessive ambition—while at the same time recognizing the extraordinary nature of his deeds. Personal, subjective commentary of this kind is characteristically lacking in court records and historical documents related to the Masakado Uprising.

War tales adhere to the outlines of history, describing real events and the lives of real people, and to some extent they resemble historical records. That is to say, they date events, cite historical documents, and generally employ a chronological format. This quasi-historical aspect is especially prominent in *Shōmonki* and *Mutsuwaki*, but less conspicuous in later works in the tradition that were part of the recitative repertory of medieval jongleurs; the Kakuichi text, 1371, of *Heike Monogatari* is one such example. War tales also depart from historical fact: sometimes they incorporate legendary material or ignore some events while giving undue emphasis to others. In some instances facts are altered for the sake of improving the plot or enhancing the portrayal of a character. This kind of historical revision is most evident in the popular recited texts of certain war

[34] Hamilton, p. v.

tales, such as the Kakuichi *Heike Monogatari* and the Kotohira version, ca. fifteenth century, of *Hōgen Monogatari*, each of which was the culmination of decades of literary revision.[35]

The oral recitation of certain select *gunkimono* by *biwa-hōshi* and *goze* (blind itinerant jongleurs) flourished as a popular literary pastime in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There is evidence that *Shōmonki* was read and enjoyed as a picture scroll with captions, at least in the private quarters of Yoritomo and his successors, in the late twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth century. According to *Azuma Kagami* for Kangen 3(1245).10.11, pictures for *Taira no Masakado no Kassenjō* (presumably an early title of *Shōmonki*) were prepared on the shogun's orders and one Noritaka recited the text in the shogun's quarters, after which a drinking party was held.[36] An earlier entry, for Genkyū 1(1204).11.26, states that the authorities in Kamakura ordered artists to prepare the 'Battles of Masakado Picture Scroll' (*Masakado Kassen no E*); the shogun was extremely pleased to receive the illustrated narrative, consisting of some twenty scrolls.[37]

Although it is apparent from these entries that *Shōmonki* was recited in some form in the headquarters of the shogun during the early decades of the Kamakura period, there is no evidence that it was ever recited publicly as part of the repertory of the jongleurs. Had *Shōmonki* gained a place in the popular recitative tradition, a revised version of the text written in the accessible *wakan konkōbun* style would probably have come down to the present day.[38] All the extant texts of *Shōmonki*, including the abridged versions described in Chapter 2, are written in *hentai kambun*, which could be read with ease by only a small, well-educated minority.

The reason why *Shōmonki* was apparently never revised and polished for the purpose of oral recitation is difficult, if not impossible, to know. One may speculate that the sensitive political nature of the subject matter may have been a factor. It is also possible that *Shōmonki*'s short and relatively simple story, with its sketchily drawn

[35] On the use of the Kotohira version of *Hōgen Monogatari* as a text for recitation, see Morii, pp. 19 & 23.

[36] *Furigana-tsuki Azuma Kagami*, p. 612.

[37] *Furigana-tsuki Azuma Kagami*, p. 363. To my knowledge, the first mention of these *Azuma Kagami* entries is made in Yamanaka, pp. 32–33.

[38] *Wakan konkōbun* is a style of Japanese combining Chinese characters and Japanese *kana*; it was widely used in the writing of war tales after the thirteenth century.

battle scenes and small number of protagonists, provided insufficient material upon which to base a popular, revised version.[39]

The question of how subject matter affects the popularity of war tales is important with later works in the genre as well, particularly those composed during the mid- to late-Muromachi period when the genre had begun to decline. Although hundreds of war tales and military chronicles were written in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this was by no means a golden age for the genre. In fact, only three war tales out of the two hundred or more extant ones composed during this period are believed to have been widely read or recited in their day, while the rest appear to have languished in obscurity.[40] This loss of public interest is no doubt closely tied to the narrowing of subject matter in these later *gunkimono*, which typically describe local battles of no national significance or broad political impact.

The late-Muromachi and early-Sengoku periods saw an increasing decentralization of political power and virtually incessant conflict within warrior society, often between rival daimyo and their vassals. Six basic patterns of conflict in the *gunkimono* of the period have been identified. In almost every case, the battles of the Ōnin Wars (*Ōnin no Ran*), 1467–1477, being the notable exception, the conflict is of a limited nature, such as a particular battle or an isolated incident between two rival houses.[41] This regional warfare was generally of interest only to the local populace or to the parties directly involved in the strife.

At the same time that *gunkimono* became more parochial and family-centered, they also lost philosophical depth, many degenerating into mere panegyrics of victorious warriors and their houses and showing little interest in more universal human concerns—the loss of life, the horror of war, and the transience of mundane glory. Whereas *Heike Monogatari* takes as its theme the fate of the vanquished Taira, tracing the tragic annihilation of the clan at the hands of the Minamoto, the later *gunkimono* seldom look at the victims of war or evoke the pathos of mortal conflict. Herein lies one

[39] Also, the circulating texts, of which there were perhaps only a limited number, may have become lost or stored away and forgotten at some point, possibly as early as the thirteenth century.

[40] This estimate of two hundred includes all extant war tales, military chronicles, and other military narratives currently available in print. The number of additional extant works not yet published is uncertain.

[41] Kajihara (2), p. 58.

of the essential qualitative differences between the finest war tales, those having lasting appeal as literature, and the more numerous mediocre works from the period when the genre was in decline.

Like *Heike Monogatari*, the greatest of the war tales, *Shōmonki* is a moving and humane account of war. It returns repeatedly to the theme of the brutality and devastation of military conflict and ultimately renounces war as a means to an end. Although the tragedy of human suffering brought by war continued to be a major theme in later *gunkimono*, the ideal of non-aggression introduced in *Shōmonki* is not developed into a basic philosophical tenet in the work's literary descendants. The belief held by the author of *Shōmonki* that some men could refrain from taking up arms and keep their belligerent tendencies in check eventually gave way to a resigned acceptance of the inevitability of strife and evil in the Latter Age of the Buddhist Law.

Shōmonki

Masakado,[1] I have heard it said, was a fifth-generation descendant of Emperor Kashiwabara, 'Extender of the Imperial Domain and Ruler of All the Land'.[2] He was the grandson of Prince Takamochi,[3] a third-generation descendant of Emperor Kashiwabara. Masakado's father, Taira no Ason no Yoshimochi,[4] was commander-in-chief of the Northeastern Defense Headquarters in Mutsu.[5] Yoshimochi's older brother was Taira no Yoshikane no Ason, who was then the vice-governor of Shimōsa province and the paternal uncle of Masakado.[6] Back in Enchō 9, Masakado, who was Yoshi-

[1] Taira no Masakado, d. 940, is the main protagonist in *Shōmonki*. According to *Shōmon Ryakki*, he was the son of Taira no Yoshimochi. The correct name of Masakado's father is believed to be Yoshimasa—see n. 4, below. *Sompi Bummyaku* lists Masakado as the third of eight sons of Yoshimasa; *Sōma Keizu* makes him the second of seven sons. See the genealogical charts in the appendix, pp. 142–43, below.

[2] Kashiwabara is the posthumous name of Emperor Kammu, r. 781–806. The sobriquet, 'Extender of the Imperial Domain and Ruler of All the Land', is perhaps an allusion to Kammu's strenuous military campaigns to bring the territory inhabited by the *emishi* (*ezo*) (see p. 26, n. 27, above) under imperial rule.

[3] Takamochi no Ōkimi was descended from Emperor Kammu through Kammu's son Katsurahara Shinnō and grandson Takami no Ōkimi. Takamochi received the surname of Taira from Emperor Uda in 889 and thereby founded the Kammu Heike line. In the same year he was appointed vice-governor of Kazusa and took up residence there.

[4] 平朝臣良持, died ca. 931. The important genealogies, including *Sompi Bummyaku* and *Sōma Keizu*, all give his name as Yoshimasa 良将, which is believed to be the correct version and is the one used hereafter. According to *Sompi Bummyaku*, Yoshimasa was the third son of Takamochi no Ōkimi and the immediate junior of Yoshikane. *Kokushi Taikei*, LX, pt. 2, p. 11.

The title *ason* was the second highest of eight hereditary titles, or *kabane*, established in 685. The placement of the title between the family name and the given name, as is found here, normally indicates that the person holds the fifth rank. When *ason* follows the given name, the fourth rank is usually indicated. *Iwanami Kogo Jiten*, p. 30.

[5] The Northeastern Defense Headquarters, or *chinjufu*, was the principal military defense headquarters established by the government in early Nara times for the purpose of controlling incursions of the *emishi* into Mutsu and Dewa in northeastern Japan. In 802, the *chinjufu* was moved from Taga-jō to Isawa-jō, just to the north of modern Sendai.

[6] Taira no Yoshikane no Ason is referred to here as Masakado's *hakufu*, a term designating a paternal uncle who is senior to one's father in age. Yoshikane was the immediate senior of Masakado's father and the second son of Takamochi, according to *Sompi Bummyaku*, in *Kokushi Taikei*, LX, pt. 2, p. 11. Yoshikane served

kane's son-in-law, had a falling out with Yoshikane over a trivial matter involving a woman.[7,8]

* * *

Tasuku[9] and the others took up their positions at . . . Nomoto[10] . . . and lay in wait for Masakado. They turned toward their sacred battle standard,[11] waved a banner, and struck a drum[12] when Masakado's army came into view on the distant horizon. [The 'battle standard' is an object of military use and is made from animal hair. The

both as vice-governor of Shimōsa and as vice-governor of Kazusa at different times during his career. Although identified as the vice-governor of Shimōsa in the opening paragraph, he may in fact have been serving as vice-governor of Kazusa during the years covered in the story, because he often comes and goes from that province.

[7] It has been conjectured that this woman was the daughter of Yoshikane and that she had married her first cousin Masakado against the wishes of her father. See Kajihara (7), I, pp. 8–11, for the various theories concerning her identity.

[8] Since *Shimpukuji-bon* and *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, the earliest extant texts of *Shōmonki*, both being from the mid-Heian period, lack their opening portions, the first paragraph of the present translation is based on *Shōmon Ryakki*, an abridged, seventeenth-century version of the work. For the text of this passage, see Kajihara (7), I, p. 3.

[9] Minamoto no Tasuku was the eldest son of Minamoto no Mamoru—see p. 77, n. 23, below. The *Shimpukuji-bon* manuscript begins in mid-sentence with this fragment: 裏等野本□扶持張陣相待将門. The three-character lacuna between the words Nomoto and Tasuku appears to have been caused by water damage to the text. The three characters in question were most likely a person or place name. The characters 裏等 at the beginning of this sentence have not been translated as their reading is uncertain.

[10] There are numerous theories concerning the location of the village of Nomoto. It may have been in the area of modern Akahama, which is some three kilometers southeast of Akeno-chō in Makabe district in Ibaraki prefecture. The Minamoto no Mamoru family is thought to have held sway in the Nomoto area, and it is speculated that Masakado was ambushed and forced to do battle there by Mamoru, his sons, and other supporters. See Kōda, p. 195.

[11] 'Sacred battle standard' is *tōkutsu no kami*, 'the god of the battle standard', in the original. In Masakado's day, the battle standard was considered a sacred object, the dwelling place of a protective deity. As the explanatory note in *Shōmonki* indicates, the standard was often decorated with animal hair, which was bound together to form a tassel and attached to the top of the staff, where a pennant-like flag was displayed.

[12] *Kane* 鉦, literally 'gong'. The reading for 鉦 that is given below in the annotation, *furi-tsuzumi*, 'a small, double skin-headed drum', was evidently widely accepted in Heian times, although it is not semantically accurate. The *kane*, a metal instrument, was traditionally used to signal a withdrawal from battle; the *tsuzumi*, a skin-covered drum, gave the signal to advance.

'drum' is an instrument used in battle; it is popularly known as a *furi-tsuzumi*.] Masakado was able neither to retreat nor advance, but he summoned his strength and exhorted the troops to hold their ground, whereupon they crossed swords with the foe.

Fortunately, the direction of the wind was in Masakado's favor, and his arrows flew through the air, unerringly hitting their target. Tasuku and the others fought hard, but in the end they were defeated. Many men perished in the battle, and only a few managed to survive.

On the 4th day of the month,[13] Masakado razed all the houses in Nomoto, Shida, Ōgushi, and Motoki,[14] from the larger residences down to the smaller dwellings of his enemies' followers. Some people who had been hiding in the houses that had been set on fire lost their direction in the smoke and were unable to escape.[15] Others who had fled their burning dwellings recoiled in fright at the sight of flying arrows and plunged back into the flames, screaming and weeping. . . . Vast stores of rice, enough to last for a millennium, were destroyed by fire in no time at all,[16] and more than five hundred houses belonging to Minamoto's supporters[17] in the three districts of Tsukuba, Makabe, and Niibari were burned to the ground.[18] How sad to see men and women become fuel for the

[13] It was the Second Month, Jōhei 5 (935).

[14] Shida is identified with the modern hamlet of Higashi-Ishida, located near Akeno-chō in Makabe district. Taira no Kunika, Sadamori's father, is thought to have had his residence there. Ōgushi is believed to have been located at the site of modern Ōkushi to the northeast of Shimotsuma-shi in Ibaraki. Motoki, also read Toriki, is identified with the modern hamlet of Hongi, located on the outskirts of Yamato-mura, some 10 km northwest of the Shida-Nomoto area. In total, Masakado's path of destruction appears to have spanned a distance of about 15 km.

[15] This sentence is not legible in *Shimpukuji-bon* owing to water damage, and has therefore been copied from the entry for Tengyō 2(939).11.21 in *Fusō Ryakki*, ca. 12th century, which is believed to have been based on the once legible *Shimpukuji-bon* text. See *Kokushi Taikei*, XII, p. 214.

[16] This sentence, partly obliterated owing to water damage, reads as follows: □□於□□之中千年之貯伴於一時炎. I have translated only the last nine characters.

[17] The term *banrui* is used here. Scholarly opinion concerning its precise meaning is varied. In the view of Hayashi Rokurō, the *banrui* were a mobile, independent body of influential peasants that included the *dogō*, or powerful landowners residing in the provinces. In Hayashi's view, they rallied in support of a specific cause or event, but had no enduring relationship with the local leader. For this and other views, see Hayashi (3), p. 147.

[18] Tsukuba, Makabe, and Niibari districts were located in the southwestern part of Hitachi province.

flames, and valuable treasures fall into the hands of others! The words 'The Three Realms of Existence are like a burning house;[19] their riches have five owners and move continuously from hand to hand,' would seem to describe this very situation.[20]

The roar of the flames rivaled the sound of thunder as it reverberated through the heavens, and the dark smoke contended with the clouds as it covered the sky. Enveloped in smoke, the Sannō Shrine became hidden from view as though concealed by a cliff,[21] while houses disintegrated like ashes before the wind. Government officials and common folk alike were filled with anguish as they witnessed the tragedy, and relatives and acquaintances of the victims in places far and near felt sick at heart when news of these events reached them. Each death from an enemy arrow meant the unforeseen severance of the bond between father and son; flight without one's shield meant an unexpected separation from one's spouse.

Among the unfortunate people was a man named Sadamori who served at court.[22] He had gone to the capital before the fighting broke out, and there received a detailed account of the incident. Sadamori reflected upon the state of affairs and recalled that he and the former senior secretary of Hitachi, Minamoto no Mamoru,[23]

[19] In the Buddhist world view, 'The Three Realms of Existence', or *sangai*, is the world in which all unenlightened human beings live and transmigrate in the continuing cycle of birth and death, which is perpetuated by evil thought and action. The phrase, 'The Three Realms of Existence are like a burning house,' is taken from a passage in the 'Parable of the Burning House' in *Myōhō Rengekyō*, in *Daizōkyō*, IX, p. 14.3.

[20] The meaning of the term 'five owners', or *goshu* 五主, is uncertain. It has been suggested that it is synonymous with the word *goke* 五家, which, as used in a passage in *Daichidoron*, a Buddhist commentary translated into Chinese from the original Sanskrit in the early fifth century, denotes five threatening forces and human types—kings, thieves, fire, water, and prodigal sons—that are liable to cause a person to lose his wealth or property. Kajihara (7), I, pp. 34–35.

[21] *Sannō* is the abbreviated name of a group of Shinto shrines called collectively *Sannō Nijū-issha Daigongen*. Established about 820, they were located at the site of what now remains of Hie Jinja in the hamlet of Akahama near Akeno-chō in Makabe district. See Akagi (3), p. 138.

[22] Taira no Sadamori, dates unknown, was the eldest son of Kunika, who died during the battle at Nomoto in the Second Month of Jōhei 5 (935). The first cousin of Masakado, Sadamori made his residence in the capital, where he held the post of equerry, or *sama no jō*, a third-level official in the Left Imperial Stables (*samaryō*). He later occupied a number of prestigious posts, including the governorships of Mutsu and Tamba and the position of commander-in-chief of the Northeastern Defense Headquarters.

and Mamoru's sons were really like members of the same family. Although he himself had not taken part in the fighting, he was nonetheless caught up in the troubles of Mamoru's family.[24] Moreover, Sadamori's own father, Kunika, had lost his life and his house had been completely destroyed.

Sadamori was shocked and grief-stricken when he heard from afar the news of his father's death. Riches are said to have 'five owners', so how can one lament their loss? Sadamori felt nothing but sorrow over the report of his father's needless departure to the underworld and the plight of his surviving mother, who was said to be roaming the countryside all alone. This news reached Sadamori as he sat whiling away the morning hours and it caused tears to stream down his cheeks; at night while he lay abed, his heart ached with sorrow at the thought of his misfortune. Unable to bear the extreme pain of his mourning any longer, Sadamori requested a leave of absence from court and returned to his village.[25]

After Sadamori finally reached home, he looked for his father's remains among the smoking debris and searched for his mother among the rocky cliffs. He was fortunate in having been appointed secretary of Hitachi, but upon his return to that province he sadly intoned 'The Ballad of the Parting Crane'.[26] Before long, however, word of mouth helped him to find his beloved spouse, and news learned at second hand enabled him to discover the whereabouts of his cherished lover.[27] But how sad the sight of Sadamori with a cloth hat placed upon his dark hair and a sedge sash tied around his mourning robe! Winter passed, and with the coming of spring, his period of devoted filial service at last came to an end. With the

[23] The father-in-law of Sadamori, Yoshimasa (see p. 78, n. 31, below), and sons or daughters of Yoshikane. Kunika took over the post of senior secretary (*daijō*) of Hitachi from Mamoru—the year is uncertain—and upon Kunika's death, Sadamori appears to have succeeded to the post.

[24] Owing to his ties of marriage.

[25] Shida—see p. 75, n. 14, above.

[26] The Ballad of the Parting Crane (*Bekkaku no Den*) is an allusion to *Pieh-ho-ts'ao*, the title of a famous *kin* (Chinese zither) composition contained in *Yüeh-fu shih-chi*, 58, p. 6b. Shang-ling Mu-tzu, a young herdsman, is said to have written the song for his wife when she was sent away by his family for failing to bear a child. That 'Sadamori sadly intoned "The Ballad of the Parting Crane",' means that he lamented the sadness of separation from his wife.

[27] 'Beloved spouse' and 'cherished lover' are probably both references to Sadamori's wife and not to two different women, as some commentators have suggested. In writing parallel prose, authors are often obliged to repeat themselves using similar words for poetic variation.

new year and a change of season, Sadamori fulfilled his desire to mourn the death of his father until the first anniversary of his passing.[28]

Sadamori paused to give thought to his family situation. Basically, he and Masakado were not real enemies at all; Sadamori's current situation was simply due to his having become involved in the problems of Mamoru's family. [There is a saying that a man of mean standing moves at the heels of those who are highly placed and that a weak man is dependent on the powerful. Thus, Sadamori thought it best to follow his superiors respectfully.][29] Moreover, Sadamori believed that, since he held the not inconsequential position of stable intendant,[30] he ought to return to public service in the capital and make the utmost effort to win promotion in his work. But on the other hand, he reasoned, he had a widowed mother at home, and who was there but her children to look after her? And as for the many family lands, who else but he could manage them? The only solution was to develop a close relationship with Masakado, maintain friendly relations between East and West, and spread harmony and goodwill throughout the land. Sadamori then proceeded to express these hopes to Masakado in writing, declaring that he believed it desirable for them to establish a cordial relationship.

But while Sadamori is making overtures to Masakado, let the story turn to Taira no Yoshimasa, who was the son of the late former vice-governor of Kazusa, Prince Takamochi, by a mistress, and was the second eldest uncle of Masakado.[31] Not only were Yoshimasa and Vice-Governor Yoshikane no Ason brothers, but both men were

[28] Sadamori's father died on the 4th day, Second Month (mid-spring), Jōhei 5 (935). Sadamori probably reached home in the Fourth Month (early summer) at the earliest and passed the following winter there in mourning with his mother until the first anniversary of his father's death.

[29] The source of this saying is unknown. The note seems to be an oblique criticism of Sadamori's close affiliation with Mamoru, his relative by marriage, who was Masakado's adversary at Nomoto.

[30] *Shuki no shoku* 守器之職. No other examples of the use of this term are known. *Shuki*, 'the maintenance of vehicles, clothing, or equipage [belonging to the government, the emperor, etc.]' in combination with *shoku*, meaning 'post', is perhaps a reference to Sadamori's position as equerry. It appears that Sadamori formally retained this position after taking over his father's post as senior secretary of Hitachi in Jōhei 5 (935).

[31] There is no other source to corroborate *Shōmonki*'s identification of Taira no Yoshimasa 平良正 (not to be confused with Masakado's father, Yoshimasa 良将) as Masakado's 'second eldest uncle'. According to *Sompi Bummyaku*, Yoshimasa was the son of Takamochi's eighth son, Yoshishige, and thus Masakado's first cousin.

related by marriage to the former senior secretary of Hitachi, Minamoto no Mamoru. Mamoru was constantly lamenting the fact that his sons Tasuku, Takashi, and Shigeru had been killed by Masakado.[32] Yoshikane had been living in Kazusa at the time and had therefore not become involved in the incident.[33] But Yoshimasa was so grief-stricken over the deaths of his relations that, even without Yoshikane's assistance, he rushed around Hitachi as fast as a whirling wheel, making plans for a retaliatory attack on Masakado.[34] In fact, he was so affected by the distress of Mamoru, his relative by marriage, that his closer blood relationship to Masakado suddenly meant very little to him, and he began devising a military plan for destroying Masakado. It was too early to say who would emerge victorious, but Mamoru had to chuckle with pleasure to see Yoshimasa work with such ferocious zeal. Yoshimasa's men slung their shields on their backs in the proper manner and set out for the battlefield.

Masakado had received news of Yoshimasa's departure and left without delay on the 21st day, Tenth Month, Jōhei 5, heading for the village of Kawawa in the Niibari district of Hitachi.[35]

Upon Masakado's arrival, Yoshimasa shouted out a battle cry and engaged the enemy in combat according to plan. Both sides fought hard, laying their lives on the line. But fortune was with Masakado and he emerged the victor; Yoshimasa had no such luck and ended the loser. More than sixty of Yoshimasa's men were killed by arrows, while countless others fled into hiding. Masakado returned to his village on the 22nd day of the month.[36] Word of the humiliating defeat of Yoshimasa, his in-laws, and supporters

[32] This is the first we learn that Tasuku and his two brothers died in the fighting at Nomoto. The passage in *Shōmonki* that describes the battle states only, 'Tasuku and the others fought hard, but in the end they were defeated' (p. 75, above).

[33] Yoshikane may have been serving as vice-governor of Kazusa at this time, which would explain why he was not present to witness the battle at Nomoto.

[34] I have added the explanatory phrase, '. . . making plans for a retaliatory attack on Masakado.'

[35] Kawawa no mura was probably located near modern Kawanishi in Yachiyo-chō in Yūki district, Ibaraki.

[36] It is uncertain whether Masakado was living in Iwai (see p. 93, n. 100, below) or in Kamawa at this time. Kamawa was located in the vicinity of modern Kamaniwa near Chiyokawa-mura in Ibaraki. Masakado had a residence in Iwai at the time of Yoshikane's night attack (see p. 93, below), but he is said to have returned to Kamawa after conquering Hitachi (p. 107, below). Thus it is possible that he kept residences in both places during the years covered in *Shōmonki*.

spread to other provinces, while the fame of their enemy soared.

In his despair, Yoshimasa felt as forlorn as a lone cloud in the sky. It was as though he had been vainly chasing a shadow that rode a mighty gale. But having suffered so ignominious a defeat, Yoshimasa was all the more determined to do battle with his enemy once more. Thus, he wrote a letter to his elder brother, Vice-Governor Yoshikane, in which he expressed concern over his lack of soldiers:

'Thunder resounds in the heavens on account of the rain and the wind. Storks soar high into the clouds only because they have the use of their wings.[37] I ask for your support in order that Masakado's evil rampage may be checked. When this has been accomplished, disorder in the province will cease of its own accord, and the unrest prevailing at all levels of society will surely subside.'

After reading the letter, Yoshikane observed:

'An evil king of olden times committed so grave a crime as killing his own father.[38] How can people living in these times tolerate our nephew's transgressions in his quest for power? What my younger brother Yoshimasa says is entirely correct; in fact, it is the very same thing that Mamoru, my relative by marriage, has complained to me about in recent months. Now that I am the senior among my in-laws, how can I not come to Yoshimasa's aid?[39] We must hasten our preparations for war and then stealthily lie in wait for Masakado.'

Having won Yoshikane's support, Yoshimasa became as animated as a dragon that has returned to water, full of the kind of enthusiasm shown by Li Ling long ago.[40]

[37] The source of this line, 'Storks soar high . . . because they have the use of their wings,' is *Ti fan*, 1, p. 6b, which the author has followed almost verbatim. The source, if any, for the preceding line in *Shōmonki* is not known.

[38] An allusion to the infamous Indian prince of Magadha, Ajātaśatru (J. Ajase Ō), who was incited by Devadatta, the heretical cousin of the Buddha, to murder his father the king in order to put himself on the throne. See also p. 118, n. 208, below.

[39] Questions remain as to whether Yoshikane was in fact older than Mamoru, his relative by marriage, as this sentence suggests, or whether he had simply risen to a position of leadership in the Taira-Minamoto family alliance owing to Mamoru's retirement from political life.

[40] Dragons are said to ascend to heaven in the spring and lurk deep in the water in the fall. Primarily known as spirits of the water, they are back in their element when they 'return to water'.

Li Ling, a renowned archer and military general, was chosen by Emperor Wu, r. 140–86 B.C., of the Former Han dynasty to lead a military campaign against the Hsiung-nu, the first attack to be launched in barbarian territory. His name appears three times in the text as a paragon of martial skill.

When they heard rumors of these preparations for war, men who had been wounded in the previous encounter bound up their injuries and gathered together, while those who had fled the scene of battle repaired their shields and rallied for war.

Meanwhile, Vice-Governor Yoshikane assembled his recruits and arrayed them in battle formation. On the 26th day, Sixth Month, Jōhei 6, they left the provinces of Kazusa and Shimōsa, and headed for Hitachi, moving out in cloud-like multitudes.[41] It is said that local officials tried to stop Yoshikane, but he quickly slipped past them on the pretext of going to pay a visit to his in-laws. Yoshikane and his men took a back road from Musa district in Kazusa and arrived in Kamusaki in the Katori district of Shimōsa without having to pass through any checkpoints along the way.[42] They made a crossing from the wharf there and reached the harbor of Esaki in the Shida district of Hitachi.[43] Early on the following morning, they arrived at the Mimori camp, which was also in Hitachi.[44]

That morning at dawn Yoshimasa approached Yoshikane to speak with him about some suspicions he had.[45] Since Sadamori had long been friendly with Yoshikane, he too met with him.[46] Yoshikane said to Sadamori:

'I hear that you are on friendly terms with Masakado. This does not become a warrior. A warrior must prize his honor above all else. How can you bring yourself to curry favor with the enemy when some of our relations have been murdered and a number of our valuables have been stolen? Join forces with us now, and we will settle things with Masakado once and for all.'

[41] 'Cloud-like' (*kumo no gotoku*) is a stock phrase used in *Shōmonki* to describe vast numbers of people or things.

[42] Kamusaki is identified with the modern village of Kōzaki-chō in the Katori district in Chiba. From Kamusaki it was possible to ferry across the Tone River, a broad body of water that was called E no ura at the time of the Masakado Uprising.

[43] Esaki no tsu, the settlement on the opposite shore of E no ura, has not been clearly identified. For a summary of the many theories concerning its location, see Kajihara (7), I, pp. 86–87.

[44] Mimori is identified with the modern town of the same name located southwest of Tsukuba-chō in Ibaraki. Yoshimasa apparently made his residence there.

[45] These were probably suspicions regarding Masakado and/or Sadamori. Sadamori, it will be recalled, was seeking reconciliation with Masakado and was probably not considered entirely trustworthy by his Taira uncles.

[46] Sadamori was Yoshikane's nephew, which would undoubtedly explain why the two men were well acquainted. Evidently Sadamori decided not to return to the capital after his leave of absence expired in the spring of Jōhei 6 (936), choosing to remain in Hitachi to care for his mother. This would explain why he was able to visit Yoshikane's camp.

Sadamori was easily swayed by these attractive propositions and before he knew it, he had joined in their cause, even though that had not been his original intention.

Yoshikane and his men marched off to battle heading in the direction of Shimotsuke province.[47] They moved in a long column with a presence so imposing that the earth trembled beneath their feet and the grass yielded to them as they passed. Masakado had received an emergency report about Yoshikane's departure, and in order to find out whether the story was true or not, he set out for the Shimotsuke border on the 26th day, Sixth Month,[48] in command of just over one hundred mounted soldiers.

Masakado found that Yoshikane's troops were in fact several thousand strong, and as he sized them up, he realized that he could not possibly contend with them. After all, Yoshikane's soldiers were still fresh for they had not done battle; his men and horses were amply nourished, and his army was fully equipped. Masakado's men, on the other hand, had been crushed by the enemy many times; moreover, they were poorly armed and their combined strength was weak.

Seeing the state of Masakado's troops, the enemy formed a wall of shields and moved out to deliver the decisive blow. But before the rival forces were upon them, Masakado dispatched his foot soldiers, launching a counterattack that all but brought the fighting to an end. More than eighty mounted men were killed in the battle. Vice-Governor Yoshikane was panic-stricken and fled with his men, all of them dragging their shields as they went. Whipping his horse into a gallop and shouting out his name,[49] Masakado gave chase, whereupon the enemy had no recourse but to take refuge in the provincial offices.

[47] The actual destination of Yoshikane's army was probably Masakado's home base in Kamawa. By marching northwest to Shimotsuke from Mimori and then heading southeast toward Masakado's residence, Yoshikane's army would have been able to cross the Kinu River, which was probably flooding at the time, at its most easily fordable point. The battle was eventually fought near the Shimotsuke provincial offices located in Tsuka district.

[48] This date follows *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*. *Shimpukuji-bon* has 'the 26th day of the Tenth Month' here. Actually, the 26th day of the Sixth Month would appear to be a few days too early for Masakado's departure, since Yoshikane himself could not have set out for Shimotsuke until some time after his arrival in Mimori on the 27th, and Masakado could not have heard of these developments much before the 28th.

[49] Declaring one's name (*nanori*) just before going into battle was considered a point of personal honor among warriors and is a recurring convention in *gunki-*

Masakado then began to reflect: Yoshikane was an enemy of long standing who had haunted him day and night, and yet their blood relationship was actually quite close. Indeed, as far as genealogy was concerned, they belonged to the same family. There is a saying that goes, 'Husband and wife are as close to each other as tiles on a roof; relatives are less close, like reeds used for thatching.' Even so, Masakado thought, if in the end he were to kill Yoshikane, would he not be harshly condemned by people everywhere?[50] For this reason, he decided to allow just the vice-governor to go free. But when he withdrew his guards from along the west side of the provincial offices and permitted his uncle to get away, a thousand or more enemy soldiers also managed to escape like pheasants eluding a hawk, tasting the joy felt by birds freed from their cages.

On that same day Masakado informed neighboring provinces of the vice-governor's treacherous attack and entered the events in the official records.[51] On the following day he returned to his residence, and for a while thereafter nothing unusual happened.

Meanwhile, in response to charges brought by the former senior secretary Minamoto no Mamoru, the Council of State had issued an edict on the 29th day, Twelfth Month, Jōhei 5, summoning the aforementioned Mamoru and the suspects Taira no Masakado and Maki.[52] Ujika no Tomooki, Anaho no Ujitachi, and also Anaho no

mono. In addition to giving his name, the warrior usually announced his age, place of residence, genealogy, and, of course, his rank and position. He would also boast of his past accomplishments on the battlefield, vaunting his martial prowess and challenging his adversary to fight.

[50] Masakado had more than condemnation to fear. Murdering a public official was among the gravest of crimes recognized in his day and was punishable by death.

[51] These were probably records kept in the provincial offices. Masakado's access to government records suggests that he was employed as a public official, although there is no written proof of this.

[52] This appears to have been Mamoru's first complaint to the authorities following the death of his sons.

Maki (family name, Taira?) is a mysterious figure about whom little is known. *Rekidai Kōki*, 2, describes the involvement of one Taira no Maki in the battle at Nomoto as follows:

'It says in *Masakado no Kassenjō* [The Battles of Masakado] that Masakado first did battle with his uncle Taira no Yoshikane. Then, persuaded by Taira no Maki, he fought Minamoto no Mamoru and Taira no Kunika in the Second Month of Jōhei 5 [935].' *Rekidai Kōki*, in *Shintei Zōho Shiseki Shūran*, II, p. 107.

Most likely, Taira no Maki is the Maki named here in connection with Mamoru's suit. On p. 91, below, Maki is identified as a unit leader, presumably in Masakado's army.

Tomoyuki (who held the senior sixth rank, upper grade, and was supervisor in the Left Bodyguards) were dispatched by the government to deliver the edict to Shimōsa, Shimotsuke, and Hitachi, where they arrived on the 7th day, Ninth Month, in the following year.[53]

On the 17th day, Tenth Month, of that year, Masakado departed in haste for the capital, setting out on his journey ahead of the plaintiff Mamoru.[54] Appearing at court, Masakado presented his side of the story in full detail. Fortunately, he received a favorable ruling from the emperor and was therefore cross-examined only briefly at the Imperial Police Headquarters.[55] In truth, Masakado was not adept at handling legal matters, but the gods and buddhas showed mercy toward him and he managed to present a well-reasoned case. Moreover, the emperor treated Masakado with compassion, and the court officials, too, showed him special favor; his offense was judged to be minor, and accordingly the penalty was not severe. Masakado's military prowess was acclaimed throughout the Home Provinces, and he won honor in the capital.

During the course of Masakado's stay there, the emperor issued an edict and the period name was changed. [That is, the change to Tengyō 1 was made in Jōhei 8, which was the year of the emperor's *kampaku* ceremony.[56] This is why the text states, 'the period name was

[53] It appears that each of the three envoys was sent to a different province to serve the summons: Ujika no Tomooki to Shimōsa to summon Masakado, Anaho no Ujitachi to Shimotsuke to summon Maki, and Anaho no Tomoyuki to Hitachi to serve Mamoru with a summons. The date given here for their arrival in the east is doubtful. No matter how dilatory the envoys might have been, it would not have taken them nine months to reach their destinations. Moreover, it is unlikely that all three envoys would have arrived at their respective destinations on the same day.

[54] By noting that Masakado 'set out on his journey ahead of the plaintiff,' the author draws attention to Masakado's law-abiding, compliant nature, a trait often manifested in the first half of the narrative.

[55] The author seems to have confused the order of judicial process: cross-examination at the *kebiishi-chō* (Imperial Police Headquarters) preceded review by the emperor, not vice versa. Following the cross-examination of the parties and witnesses, the *kebiishi-chō* solicited confessions, studied the evidence, and delivered a judgment, which was automatically appealed to the Council of State (*daijōkan*) whenever crimes punishable by banishment and death were being tried. The *daijōkan*'s verdict had to receive final approval by the imperial authority. Toshimitsu, pp. 74–78, 95–118, & 185–91.

[56] *Kampuku* (or *gempuku*) was a young man's coming-of-age ceremony at which his hair, thitherto worn loose, was trimmed and tied into a knot, and a headpiece (*kan*) was placed upon his head. Although this ceremony was sometimes per-

changed.'][57] The verdure of the pines augured a millennium of prosperity, and the lotus threads bound the garland honoring the Emperor of the Ten Virtuous Acts.[58] When the period name was changed, the people's heavy tax burden was lightened in accordance with a general amnesty and the punishments of those who had committed one of the eight great crimes were also remitted.[59] Masakado too benefited by the edict of the 7th day, Fourth Month, Jōhei 7, which granted remission for all crimes, great and small.[60] The season of spring flowers found Masakado beaming with joy, and in the middle of the summer he received permission to return home.[61]

Masakado's fortune was like that of Yen Tan, who gratefully took leave of the Ch'in emperor, and Urashima Tarō, who returned at long last to the site of his old village.[62] [Legendary accounts relate that

formed as early as the tenth year, the *kampuku* of Emperor Suzaku, r. 930–946, evidently took place when he was fifteen years of age by the Japanese method of reckoning.

[57] Suzaku's *kampuku* and the change of period name from Jōhei 8 to Tengyō 1 actually occurred in different years, not in the same year (938) as this note states. The *kampuku* took place on Jōhei 7(937).1.4, the change of *nengō* on Jōhei 8 (938).5.22. This particular change of *nengō* appears to have been undertaken as a superstitious precaution against earthquakes, military unrest in the east, and other misfortunes. DNS, I. 7, pp. 82, 208 & 210.

[58] 'Lotus threads' are symbolic of Buddhist piety and devotion. The significance of 'garland' is uncertain, but it brings to mind a figurative crown of honor adorning the emperor, whose exemplary conduct in his former existence was believed to have secured his imperial dynasty. According to Hīnayāna Buddhist thought, a ruler succeeds to the throne by having upheld the Ten Virtuous Acts (*jūzen* or *jūzenkai*, 'admonitions for virtuous behavior') in his previous existence. The *jūzen* included admonitions not to kill, commit adultery, lie, etc. *Daizōkyō*, XXIV, p. 1023. 1.

[59] This amnesty, referred to in historical records as a *taisha*, or 'great amnesty', was granted on Jōhei 7(937).1.7, three days after Suzaku's *kampuku*. DNS, I. 7, pp. 89–91. Below, *Shōmonki* erroneously dates this amnesty Jōhei 7.4.7.

'The eight great crimes', or *hachi-gyaku*, consisted of serious morally and politically subversive acts that threatened the welfare and security of the state and the emperor, or harmed superiors, family members, and the traditional social order that they upheld. Inoue, pp. 16–19.

[60] This amnesty was presumably the same as the one mentioned in the preceding sentence.

[61] It was early spring when the amnesty of Jōhei 7(937).1.7 was granted, hence the reference to 'spring flowers'.

[62] Yen Tan, short for Yen Tai-tzu Tan, was the son of Wang Hsi, ruler of Yen in the Warring States Period. Tan managed to win his freedom from Wang Cheng of Ch'in, r. 246–209, who had held him captive. Urashima Tarō was a legendary young fisherman who saved a turtle from death, only to discover that it was in reality the daughter of the Sea Spirit Deity. After marrying her and

in ancient times Yen Tan was forced to serve the Ch'in emperor for many long years.[63] But when he requested permission to return to his native village, the emperor replied, 'If a crow's head turns white and a horse grows horns, I shall allow you to go home.' Weeping, Yen Tan looked heavenward and saw a crow's head turn white; then casting his eyes down, he saw a horse grow horns. The emperor was greatly astonished and thereupon allowed him to return to his home. As for Urashima Tarō, he was fortunate in being able to visit the Land of Eternal Pleasure, but he later returned to the site of his village. This is why the text mentions them here. Detailed accounts may be found in the original texts.] As it is commonly said, 'The northern-bred horse feels melancholy whenever the north wind blows, and the southern bird is filled with sad longing as it builds its nest on a branch pointing south.'[64] If animals have such feelings, how much more does a man long for his home![65]

Thus, Masakado departed the capital without further delay on the 11th day, Fifth Month, of that year and arrived back at his home in Shimōsa. But he had scarcely rested from his journey—only a month or so had passed—when Vice-Governor Yoshikane, unable to forget his old feeling of bitterness, was once again intent on avenging his ignominious defeat at Masakado's hands.[66] Yoshikane had stockpiled a large quantity of weapons and armor in recent years and his army was unusually well prepared for combat.

On the 6th day of the Eighth Month, Yoshikane surrounded Kogai Ford,[67] which was on the border between Hitachi and

living for three years under the sea on Mt Hōrai, where life is said to be eternal, Urashima returned to his village and found that his parents had been dead for over four hundred years.

[63] 'Legendary accounts', or *den*, probably refers to storybooks written in Chinese about the life of Yen Tan and Urashima Tarō, works such as *Yen tan-tzu* and *Urashima-den*, both of which were widely read in Heian times.

[64] An allusion to the first poem in the collection of nineteen anonymous Han poems found in *Wen hsüan*, 29, p. 2a. The pertinent lines are as follows: 'The road ahead is difficult and long, / Who knows when we will meet again? / The Tartar horse faces into the wind from the north, / The bird from Yüeh makes its nest on a branch pointing south.' Waley, p. 56.

[65] Here I have followed *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, which reads as follows: *Iwan'ya jinrin no omoi ni oite ikanzo kaido no kokoro nakaramu* 況於人倫之思何無懐土之心. More literally translated: 'It is all the more natural that among people, who have human feelings, there would be no one who would not feel longing for his homeland.'

[66] In fact about two months had elapsed between the time Masakado returned from Shimōsa late in the Fifth Month and the date of Yoshikane's attack, which was on the 6th day, Eighth Month.

Shimōsa provinces. On that day, portraits of the departed souls had been requisitioned and were ceremoniously displayed in front of Yoshikane's vanguard. [The 'portraits of departed souls' were pictures of the late former vice-governor of Kazusa, Prince Takamochi, and the late former commander-in-chief at Mutsu, Taira no Yoshimochi.][68] Yoshikane lined up his best soldiers and set out with them to attack Masakado.

Masakado had incurred the wrath of the gods on that day, and he could not do anything right. Not only were his soldiers few in number but they were ill-prepared for combat. All they could do was retreat from battle with their shields on their backs.

At this juncture, Vice-Governor Yoshikane proceeded to burn down the peasant farmhouses and pasture lands of Ikuwa, which were near Kurusu'in in the Toyota district of Shimōsa.[69] Even though the people had tidily put away their rice steamers after the noonday meal, ghastly heaps of ashes piled up around every gate; although smoke no longer rose from home stoves at night, the posts and pillars of every house stood out black as lacquer. Smoke billowed into the distant sky, blanketing it like a cloud, while sparks from nearby bonfires flickered to the ground like falling stars.

Having robbed Masakado of his reputation as a valiant warrior, the enemy quickly struck camp on the 7th day of the month. Deeply embittered by his defeat, Masakado went into hiding for a time. Since he was now determined to regain lasting fame as a warrior, he spent a day or two reworking his strategy. Meanwhile, his soldiers had doubled in number and had collected some 370 halberds and shields for use in battle. On the 17th day of the same month,

[67] Kogai no watashi was located just east of modern Chiyokawa-mura in Yūki district, Ibaraki. The Kogai River is a tributary of the Tone.

[68] Prince Takamochi was Masakado's grandfather. The name Taira no Yoshimochi seems to be a reference to Masakado's father, then deceased. See p. 73, nn. 3 & 4, above. Yoshikane no doubt placed these portraits at the front of his army facing Masakado in order to unnerve him and shield his own front ranks from enemy arrows. Yoshikane expected that Masakado would hesitate to shoot in the direction of his relatives' sacred portraits.

[69] Masakado's Kamawa residence was located in the Toyota district in northeast Shimōsa. Kurusu'in, a temple to the southeast of modern Yachiyo-chō in eastern Ibaraki, was about four kilometers from Masakado's residence. The Ikuwa Pastures (*Ikuwa no mimaya*) were located just southeast of Kurusu'in and were probably government owned. Government pastures were an important center of military power and a predictable target for attack, for they were used for the care of mature horses—draft, pack, and war horses. Takeuchi, p. 473.

his men took up their positions at Horikoshi Ford in the village of Shimo Ōkata in Toyota district.[70] There they waited for Yoshikane to attack.

As had been expected, the enemy appeared in great numbers like clouds gathering on the horizon, their boisterous shouts resounding like the rumbling of thunder.[71] On that day a sudden attack of beriberi impaired Masakado's ability to think clearly on the battlefield, and as a result his soldiers fled the scene soon after combat began, scattering in all directions like spilt counting sticks.[72] The enemy then burned the remaining dwellings to the ground. Throughout the district crops were damaged by fire, and people and horses lay injured. Perhaps the adage, 'Where a thousand men camp, the plants all wither,' describes such a scene.

In order to treat his ailment, Masakado went into hiding with his wife and child in the vicinity of Ashizu Inlet in Sashima district.[73] But danger seemed imminent, so he put his wife and child into a boat on Lake Hirokawa, while he himself hid out on the bank of Musuhe[74] where the hills sheltered him from the rear. He remained there a day or two, during which time, on the 18th day, the enemy soldiers dispersed, each going his own way. On the 19th, his adversary Yoshikane crossed back into Kazusa, proceeding along the Sashima Road.[75] On the same day, Masakado's wife took the boat in which she was hiding across to the opposite shore.

At the time, the enemy had enlisted the help of a spy through whom they were able to locate and capture the boats of the party accompanying Masakado's wife. From these seven or eight vessels over three thousand items of cargo and personal effects were seized.[76] Masakado's wife and child were taken prisoner, and on the 20th the enemy brought them into Kazusa province.

[70] Shimo Ōkata no sato may have been in the vicinity of modern Ōkata in Chiyokawa-mura in Yūki district, Ibaraki.

[71] *Ikazuchi no gotoku*, 'like thunder', follows *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*. *Shimpukuji-bon* has *inazuma no gotoku*, 'like lightning'.

[72] Counting-sticks, or *san*, were thin bamboo sticks about 18 cm in length used for calendrical calculations.

[73] Kajihara speculates that Ashizu no e, a small harbor, was located on the west bank of a large, highly indented lake called Iinuma (Hirokawa no e). See Kajihara (7), 1, pp. 165–66, for this and other views concerning its location. Iinuma was reclaimed as paddy land in the early eighteenth century.

[74] 陸閑. *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* has 陸閑奥 with the puzzling gloss *kukaka no oku*. Neither of these places has been identified.

[75] This road ran north-south through Sashima district following the Kinu River.

Masakado was greatly angered and resentful that his wife had been taken from him and detained by the enemy. Although alive in body, he felt that his very soul was dead. As for his wife, she was not used to traveling and spending the night away from home, but she managed to sleep, albeit only fitfully, her heart burning with indignation. Indeed, such sleep did her little good. Always faithful to her spouse, she was like the woman who wanted to die with her husband Han P'eng.[77] As regards Masakado, his efforts to find his wife were no less than those of the Han king who searched for the daughter of the house of Yang.[78]

Several weeks passed during which Masakado made plans to rescue his wife. Although they yearned for each other, there could be no meeting. But meanwhile, some of his wife's younger brothers devised a plan to rescue her, and on the 10th day of the Ninth Month, she was secretly brought back to Toyota.[79] She had turned against her kin and sided with her husband, like the woman from Liao-tung who accompanied her husband when he attacked her own father's domain.[80]

Now Masakado and his uncle Yoshikane had long since become hardened enemies, constantly challenging each other to fight. At the time of the rescue of Masakado's wife, Vice-Governor Yoshikane was in Hitachi because he had relatives living there. When rumors

[76] Three thousand is a common pseudo-number in Sino-Japanese literature. As is the case with most large numbers used throughout the text, it merely denotes great quantity and need not be taken literally.

[77] Han P'eng was a minister to K'ang Wang of the Sung state in the time of the Chou dynasty. According to legend, K'ang seized P'eng's beautiful wife, whereupon P'eng committed suicide in despair, only to be followed in death by his wife, who leaped from a tower.

[78] A reference to Emperor Hsüan-tsung, r. 713–756, of the T'ang dynasty. Note that the author has respectfully distanced himself from Hsüan-tsung by placing him in a bygone period of history. 'The daughter of the house of Yang' is an allusion to Yang Kuei-fei, the beautiful concubine of Hsüan-tsung, who was forced to commit suicide in 756. Hsüan-tsung's grievous longing for her and his vain attempts to find her spirit were immortalized by Po Chü-i in his poem *Ch'ang-hen-ko*, 'The Song of Unending Sorrow'.

[79] Masakado's wife, the daughter of Yoshikane, had three brothers: Kimmasa, Kintsura, and Kimmoto. *Sompi Bummyaku*, in *Kokushi Taikei*, LX, pt. 2, p. 11.

[80] This woman has not been identified. A pleonasm follows this sentence in *Shimpukuji-bon*: *Kudan no me wa dōki no naka o somuki otto no ie ni nigekaeru* 件妻背同気之中逃帰於夫家: 'Masakado's wife turned against her kin and fled to her husband's home.' This sentence has been omitted from the translation.

of Yoshikane's whereabouts reached Masakado, he became determined to vanquish him.

An army of over eighteen hundred men was readied, and on the 9th day of the Tenth Month Masakado and his soldiers set out for Makabe district in Hitachi with a force so imposing that the trees and grasses yielded to them as they passed.[81] When they reached their destination, they burned down Vice-Governor Yoshikane's residence in Hatori[82] as well as all the dwellings of his supporters.

Masakado pursued his foes during the next few days. He learned that they were in hiding on a high mountain, but was unable to find them. After encamping for several days, Masakado at last received word that the enemy was on Mt Tsukuba, and on the 13th of the month he and his army set out in full force in that direction.[83]

The report was confirmed when, on approaching the mountain, they heard from afar the voices of more than a thousand enemy soldiers rising out of a valley to the south of Yubukuro Pass.[84] The mountain reverberated and the grasses shook amidst the din of drums and horse-drawn carts and the uproar of quarreling voices. Masakado closed his ranks and positioned his shield-bearing soldiers in a line. Then he wrote Yoshikane a message, at the same time ordering his men to advance.[85] But the season was early winter and the sun was beginning to set, so the soldiers on both sides withdrew from battle, dragging their shields, and kept guard in their respective camps.

From olden days down to the present, men who make war have known suffering. By day they fit arrows into bowstrings, watching out for the enemy's arrows; at night, with their bows as pillows,

[81] The date of Masakado's departure given here follows the *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* text. The *Shimpukuji-bon* version has 19th day, Ninth Month. The Tenth Month, rather than the Ninth Month, is probably correct here, since the season is said below to have been 'early winter', which, by the lunar calendar, fell in the Tenth Month.

[82] Identified with the modern village of Hatori in the northern foothills of Mt Tsukuba near Makabe-chō.

[83] Mt Tsukuba, 876 meters in height, is located in modern Makabe district in Ibaraki. The date given here for Masakado's departure follows *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*. *Shimpukuji-bon* has the 23rd day, Ninth Month.

[84] Yubukuro no yama (modern Yubukuro no tōge) is a hilly pass on the northeastern side of Mt Tsukuba and rises just to the west of modern Kobata no mura in Niibari district.

[85] The purpose of the letter was probably to announce the beginning of hostilities.

they are fearful that the enemy may be planning to attack. When the weather is stormy, a straw hat and coat are their shelter; when they camp on dewy grass, mosquitoes and horseflies, too, are their foes. But in the case of Masakado and Yoshikane, they bore such intense hatred for each other that they fought singlemindedly with complete indifference to the heat or the cold.[86]

At the time of the latest military operation, the remaining harvest was still plentiful, and once the ripened wheat had been spread over the deep mud, men and horses were able to pass without difficulty. Ten head of cattle died from eating too much fodder and seven men got drunk on wine and were killed by the enemy. [However, no one in Maki's unit died.][87] How pitiful it is to speak of the thousands of houses that were destroyed by fire, and how sad to think of the vast amounts of crops that were ruined! But to the very end Masakado was unable to engage his foes in combat and he returned to his village, his efforts all in vain.

Later, on the 5th day of the Eleventh Month of that year, the Council of State sent an edict to the provinces of Musashi, Awa, Kazusa, Hitachi, and Shimotsuke, directing Masakado to apprehend his Hitachi adversaries—Vice-Governor Yoshikane, Secretary Mamoru,[88] and Secretary Taira no Sadamori,[89] as well as Kimmasa,[90] Kintsura,[91] and Hata no Kiyobumi.[92] Masakado's spirits were greatly lifted by this order and he felt most encouraged. But the local officials in the provinces to which the edict had been sent failed to carry out the order satisfactorily, making no attempt to pursue aggressively the persons named therein.

Vice-Governor Yoshikane was still consumed with a venomous rage and his desire to kill Masakado had not abated. He was merely

[86] Here the author seems to be discussing Yoshikane and Masakado's relationship in general terms; that is, he is not referring to their activities at Yubukuro, where the two men never met in battle.

[87] For the identity of Maki, see p. 83, n. 52, above.

[88] Mamoru was the former senior secretary of Hitachi.

[89] Sadamori was the senior secretary of Hitachi at the time.

[90] Yoshikane's eldest son—see p. 89, n. 79, above.

[91] Yoshikane's second son—see p. 89, n. 79, above.

[92] Biography unknown. The connection between Kiyobumi and the other four men named in the warrant is uncertain. The translation of the sentence is based on *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, whose description of the warrant differs significantly from that found in *Shimpukuji-bon*. In the latter version, Masakado is named as the object of the arrest warrant, which is clearly an error, since the following sentence tells of his elation over receiving instructions to apprehend his enemies.

waiting for an opportune moment to kill him once and for all. Now at that time Masakado's servant Hasetsukabe no Koharumaru[93] had been making frequent trips to a temporary farm hut in the area of the Shida estate in Hitachi because he had relatives living there.[94] Yoshikane reflected on the saying, 'The sword of slander can cleave a cliff and polite petitioning can overturn a mountain.' He thought to himself that he could not fail to kill Masakado if only he could obtain secret information about him through Koharumaru. So he summoned the youth to his quarters and asked for his help in obtaining information about Masakado. Koharumaru replied:

'Very well. I must have the services of one of your farmhands at once. I will take him along with me, and little by little I will have him find out about Masakado's situation.'

The vice-governor was overwhelmed with joy. He presented Koharumaru with a bolt of Eastern silk[95] and spoke to him as follows:

'If you can carry out a plan to kill Masakado, you will be released from your arduous duties as a carrier and promoted to the status of a mounted retainer.[96] And what is more, I will give you piles of rice to strengthen your resolve and will allot you a set of clothes as a reward.'

The young man swallowed the bait,[97] not knowing that it would later lead to his death. He succumbed to the sweet poison of the

[93] Masakado's servant, probably quite young. The suffix -maru in his name indicates that he had not yet undergone the *kampuku* ceremony and was therefore probably in his early teens, if not even younger.

[94] Temporary farm huts (*taya*) were put up for workers engaged in planting or harvesting in a remote part of an estate. It is not certain who owned the Shida estate (*Shida no shō*). Kunika may have been the original owner, since he once held sway in the Shida area, but with his death in the Second Month, Jōhei 5 (935), some of his land may have come under Yoshikane's control.

[95] *Azuma no kinu*, a kind of coarsely woven plain silk.

[96] Previously Koharumaru has been called a *kushi*, a servant or errand boy, but here he is a *kafu*, or carrier. Note that after he goes to Iwai, he remains a few days to do guard duty, indicating that he also performed military tasks on Masakado's behalf.

[97] Literally, 'he ate the horsemeat.' In ancient China it was believed that eating horsemeat, particularly the liver, was detrimental to health. As noted in Kajihara (7), I, p. 219, the locus classicus for this belief is an anecdote about Mu Kung of Ch'in, found in *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu*, 8, p. 9a. While Mu King was on an expedition, his favorite horse was captured and devoured by some rustics. Later, Mu Kung revealed his magnanimity when he cautioned the men who had eaten the horse to drink some wine in order to avoid the ill effects of the meat.

chen and his joy knew no bounds.[98] Then with the farmhand in tow, Koharumaru returned to his home in Okazaki village in Toyota district.[99]

Early on the following morning, Koharumaru and his accomplice went to Masakado's residence in Iwai,[100] each bearing a load of charcoal. During the two days he spent there helping to keep the night watch, Koharumaru took his man around the place and showed him the arms storehouse, Masakado's sleeping quarters, the riding entrances on the eastern and western sides,[101] and the north and south gates, making sure that he had a clear picture of everything. The man then returned to Yoshikane's headquarters, where he gave a full report of his findings.

For some time Vice-Governor Yoshikane had been preparing his soldiers to launch a night attack on Masakado. Finally, on the evening of the 14th day of the Twelfth Month of that year, he dispatched them to Masakado's headquarters in Iwai. His horsemen, numbering over eighty, were each a match for a thousand of the enemy. They drew their bows as skillfully as did Yang Yu [according to *Han shu*, birds fell from the sky when Yang Yu took up his bow, and he could make one hundred hits with one hundred shots],[102] and each

[98] The *chen* bird was reputed to be so poisonous that fish and plants would die where it made its nest. The immediate source for the expression 'succumbing to the sweetness of the *chen*'s poison' may have been *Ti fan*, 1, p. 13b, where it is stated: 'That which is hard to bear is medicine's bitterness to the throat; that which is easy to succumb to is the sweetness of the *chen*'s poison in the mouth.'

[99] Okazaki is identified with the modern village of Osaki in Yachiyo-chō in Yūki district, Ibaraki. Okazaki was about 10 km from Masakado's residence in Kamawa.

[100] Iwai is identified with the modern city of the same name in Ibaraki.

[101] 'Riding entrances' is a tentative translation of *umauchi*, the deverbal form of *uma o utsu*, 'to mount a horse'. Otherwise it may be a reference to mounting places or riding blocks, if such things were used at that time. No other example of this word is known.

[102] Yang Yu appears to be a reference to the renowned archer Yang Yu-chi, a minister of Ch'u during the Warring States period. His name appears in *Shōmonki* and other *gunkimono* as the archer nonpareil. The account of him in *Han shu*, 51, p. 22b, reads:

'Yang Yu-chi was a fine archer from Ch'u. He shot at a willow leaf from a distance of a hundred paces and made a hundred hits. Given the size of a willow leaf, plus the fact that he hit it a hundred times, one can indeed say that this was fine archery.'

Neither *Han shu* nor any other text mentions Yang Yu-chi's proving his skill by felling birds from the sky; the author may have confused Yang with Yi I, mentioned in the following note.

carried a splendid quiver like that of the 'crow-disperser'. [According to *Huai-nan tzu*, there was an expert archer named Yi I who lived during the time of Emperor Yao. Once when ten suns appeared, he shot and hit nine of them, causing them to fall to earth. On each sun shot down there was a golden crow; thus he came to be called the 'crow-disperser'. This word is used metaphorically in the text to mean a skillful archer.][103] The mounted warriors spurred their fine steeds into a gallop. [Kuo P'o wrote about a fine steed that surpassed its mother in strength just three days after its birth and was able to travel one hundred *li* in a day.[104] The expression 'fine steeds' is used in the text merely as a figure of speech for such a horse.] Wielding their whips in the manner of Li Ling himself, they raced their horses ahead with the speed of the wind and arrived in Iwai as swiftly as birds on the wing.

At around ten o'clock at night, Yoshikane's soldiers reached the place where the road passed Hōjōji.[105] Awaiting their arrival was one of Masakado's best soldiers—a match for a thousand of the enemy—for he had secretly learned of Yoshikane's planned night attack. He infiltrated Yoshikane's rear ranks and then edged his way slowly toward the front without any of the men realizing who he really was. Upon reaching the Kamo Bridge, he rode unnoticed through the vanguard and galloped ahead to Iwai headquarters, where he gave Masakado a full report on what was happening.

Masakado and his followers were alarmed by the news; men and women alike were thrown into a panic. At around six in the morn-

[103] Yi I (also known as Hou I), whom *Shōmonki* refers to as the 'crow-disperser' (*kaiu*), performed numerous legendary feats of archery in the service of Emperor Yao, reputed to have reigned in the third millennium B.C. Once when ten suns appeared in the sky, each resembling a huge fire-breathing bird, Hou I was ordered by the emperor to shoot down the nine 'false' suns. In ancient Chinese folklore, the sun is described as a huge crow, hence the reference to 'golden crows'.

Shōmonki's quotation from a text that it calls *Huai-nan tzu* in fact differs from that text as it has come down to us. The passage on Hou I found in *Huai-nan tzu*, 8, p. 5ab, reads: 'In the times of Yao, ten suns once appeared together, scorching the crops, killing trees and plants, so that people had nothing to eat. . . . [Hou I] shot the ten suns above and destroyed the dragon-like beast below. . . . ' Morgan, p. 88.

[104] Kuo P'o, 276–324, was a distinguished man of letters. This anecdote about the one-hundred-*li* horse has not been found in any of his writings or in any other Chinese source. The author perhaps had in mind the proverbial 'thousand-*li* horse' celebrated in ancient Chinese texts such as *Hsün tzu* and *Shih chi*.

[105] Hōjōji 法城寺 is probably an error for Kesshōji 結城寺, a temple located near the modern settlement of Yahata just south of Yūki-shi in Ibaraki. It was about 23 km from Masakado's residence.

ing, the headquarters was surrounded by the enemy. Masakado had fewer than ten men on hand, and raising his voice he declared to them:

'A long time ago I heard the story of how Yu Kung overcame several tens of thousands of the enemy using only his fingernails as a shield, and how Tzu Chu, armed only with a needle, managed to capture a thousand enemy halberds.[106] How much greater a chance for success do we have, since I have the will of Prince Li Ling![107] So resolve never to turn your backs on the foe!'

Glaring fiercely and gnashing his teeth, Masakado lunged into action, exchanging blows with the enemy.

At this point, the enemy soldiers dropped their shields and ran away, dispersing like clouds. Masakado pursued them astride his horse with the speed of the wind. Those who fled looked like mice unable to find their holes when a cat is on their tails, while those who gave chase showed the strength of a hawk leaving the hunter's gauntlet to prey upon pheasants.

The first arrow shot by Masakado's men had struck down one of Yoshikane's best archers, Taji no Yoshitoshi.[108] Over forty of the enemy were killed on that day, and only a handful managed to escape with their lives. Those who were able to survive the fighting fled in all directions, blessed by Heaven's good fortune. [As for Yoshikane's spy Koharumaru, Heaven soon visited its punishment upon him; his misdeeds were found out, and he was captured and killed on the 3rd day, First Month, Jōhei 8.]

Now Secretary Sadamori reviewed the situation again and again, thinking along the following lines:

'In order to rise in the world and cultivate virtue, nothing would be better for me than to render faithful service at court. There is no more grievous way to lose one's honorable name and all there

[106] The identity of Yu Kung has not been established. The abridged texts have Yang Yu, a famous archer mentioned earlier in the text (see p. 93, n. 102, above).

Neither has Tzu Chu 子柱 been identified. Perhaps 子柱 is an error for 子注, the *tzu* or courtesy name of Liu Mien, who lived in the ninth century. Liu fought the Uighers in 845 and distinguished himself by valiant service in battle. *Ajia Rekishi Jiten*, VIII, p. 123b.

[107] Here Li Ling (see p. 80, n. 40, above) is called a *wang*, meaning 'prince' or 'king'. With regard to his investiture, *Han shu*, 54, p. 9b, states: 'The Shan-yü, regarding Li Ling as able-bodied, gave him his daughter as a wife and set him up as Yu-hsiao Wang.' Yu-hsiao Wang was an enfeoffment of some kind, but the meaning of the Hsiung-nu title 'Yu-hsiao' is not known.

[108] Possibly a relative of Taji no Tsuneakira, who managed the Ikuwa Pastures. See p. 119, n. 213, below.

is to gain in life than to commit wrongdoing. Even a man who has been leading an upright and honest life will sully his reputation by keeping bad company, just as remaining in a shed full of dried fish will make a person smell foul.[109] Moreover, as a certain text states, "Do not regret a poor fate resulting from misdeeds committed in your former life; only deplore leaving a bad name to posterity."[110] To roam a place where evil is rampant will surely lead to a bad reputation. And so the best thing for me to do would be to leave my home and promptly return to the capital, where I can advance myself through service at court.

'Moreover, life is but a passing moment in time—who in this world prospers for a thousand years? One should therefore strive to lead an upright life and never steal. Although hardly distinguished, I have nonetheless devoted myself to service at court and have been fortunate in receiving an appointment as secretary of Hitachi. What is more, if I build up a fine record of service to the court, I will no doubt be rewarded with high rank.[111] Once I am back in the capital, I will take the opportunity to voice my grievances freely.'

Thereupon Sadamori set out for the capital along the Tōsandō Road in the middle of the Second Month in the spring of Jōhei 8. When Masakado heard about this, he spoke to his supporters as follows:

'A slanderer speaks as he does because of jealous hatred toward loyal men who are in positions superior to his own. A man of evil nature is jealous when another's wealth and status are greater than his own.[112] It is said of the orchid that it is destroyed by the autumn wind just as it is coming into full flower. A worthy man wishes

[109] The source of this analogy between being in a fish shed and absorbing undesirable influences is *Shuo yüan*, 17, pp. 21b–22a: 'Being among vile men is like going into a dried-fish shop; when someone has been there a long time, he is no longer aware of the stench because he has become accustomed to it.'

[110] The source has not been identified.

[111] 'High rank' is actually '[rank of wearer of] the red or purple robes' in the original text. According to *Yōrōryō*, section 19, article 4, holders of the second or third rank were entitled to wear robes of dark purple; holders of the fourth rank, dark red; and fifth rank, light red. Since Sadamori is aspiring to wear the 'red or purple', he would seem to have held only the sixth or seventh rank at that time. He eventually attained the junior fourth rank, lower grade.

[112] For the locus classicus of these two sentences, see *Ti fan*, 1, p. 12a, which may be translated as follows: 'Obsequious and fawning, [scoundrels who commit slander] hate having the loyal and worthy above them [in station]; harboring evil thoughts, they resent that wealth and nobility are not theirs. . . . '

to be held in high esteem by others, but his detractors try to destroy his reputation.[113] Sadamori has not yet erased the ignominy of his defeat at my hands and is not about to forget his desire for revenge. If he goes to the capital, he will slander me, and so I must go in pursuit of him now and trample him down under my horse!'

At the head of a force numbering only about a hundred or so, Masakado set out in hot pursuit of Sadamori, intent on reducing him to submission. On the 29th day of the Second Month they followed Sadamori to the vicinity of Kokubunji in Chiisagata district in Shinano province.[114] Masakado's men engaged him in combat from the other side of the Chikuma River, but neither force could claim a decisive victory. Osada no Maki,[115] one of the enemy's finest warriors, was killed by an arrow. Bun'ya no Yoshitachi,[116] one of Masakado's top soldiers, was also hit but managed to survive. Blessed by Heaven's good fortune, Sadamori was able to escape 'the arrows of Lü Pu' and fled into hiding in the mountains.[117] Masakado scratched his head over and over again in frustration and returned to his village, his efforts all in vain.

Now the food supply prepared for Sadamori's long trip to the capital had been stolen in the sudden attack by Masakado's men, and Sadamori's tears of anguish fell to the grass as he lamented the ill fortune of his lonely journey. His weary horse finally crossed the border into Yamashiro province, licking the thin snow at its hooves, and his famished soldiers, braving the bitter winds, pressed onward toward the capital, bewailing their misfortune all the way. By the

[113] Again the source for these two sentences is *Ti fan*, 1, p. 13a: 'A cluster of orchids are destroyed by the autumn wind just as they are coming into full flower. A king wishes to be held in high esteem, but his detractors try to destroy his reputation.'

Note that *Shōmonki* does not follow *Ti fan* verbatim.

[114] Chiisagata district was in the northern part of Shinano province. Kokubunji, a government-sponsored provincial temple, was located just to the east of what is now the city of Ueda at the confluence of the Chikuma River and its tributary, the Kangawa.

[115] Information on Osada and the nature of his association with Sadamori is lacking.

[116] A descendant of Naga no Miko, who was the fourth son of Emperor Temmu. Kajihara (7), 1, p. 264.

[117] Lü Pu, d. 198, was a Chinese commander renowned for his skill as an archer and spearman. He achieved notoriety by murdering the two men to whom he had given service. It is probably Lü Pu, the great archer, rather than Lü Pu, the assassin, to whom the author is alluding, 'the arrows of Lü Pu' standing for the arrows of Masakado, whose own skill with the bow no doubt inspired the allusion.

life-saving grace of Heaven, they somehow managed to reach their destination.

Sadamori then wrote down his many grievances and presented his complaint to the Council of State. As a result, an imperial decree ordering that Masakado be brought before the authorities for questioning was issued to officials in Masakado's place of residence.

In the middle of the Sixth Month, Tengyō 1, Sadamori departed the capital for the east, bearing with him the Council of State's edict. But after being questioned by the authorities, Masakado became all the more rebellious and prone to violence.

Meanwhile, in the early days of the Sixth Month, Vice-Governor Yoshikane died.[118] While Sadamori was still grieving over his death, Taira no Koresuke no Ason[119] arrived at the Shimotsuke provincial offices in the winter during the Tenth Month of that year,[120] proceeding along the Tōsandō Road en route to his new post in Mutsu. Since the governor was a close friend of his, Sadamori thought that he would like to travel together with Koresuke and asked him whether he would agree.[121] Koresuke replied that he thought it was a splendid idea.

But just as they were about to set out, Masakado came in pursuit of Sadamori, believing this a good chance to catch him off guard. Masakado positioned his guards at the front and rear exits of the provincial offices and then left to comb the hills for Sadamori. He tramped through the underbush looking for his footprints, but by the grace of Heaven, Sadamori had already fled with the speed of the wind, disappearing from sight like dispersing clouds. The governor fretted over what to do, but he finally deserted Sadamori and proceeded to his assigned province.

After fleeing into hiding, Sadamori made the mountains his home by day, while a rock served as his pillow by night. He became more and more apprehensive that thieves would attack him and increas-

[118] The chronology of the narrative is confused here. The correct year of Yoshikane's death is Tengyō 2 (939), not Tengyō 1. A second obituary found on p. 103, below, records the year correctly.

[119] Biography unknown. Possibly a descendant of Takamune no Ōkimi, the younger brother of Masakado's great-grandfather, Takami no Ōkimi. Koresuke held the post of *sama no kami* (director of the Left Imperial Stables) prior to his appointment as governor of Mutsu.

[120] Here, too, the correct year is Tengyō 2 (939), as documented by *Teishinkō Kishō* for Tengyō 2.8.17, which records a farewell party given for Taira no Koresuke by Fujiwara no Tadahira. DNS, I. 7, p. 487.

[121] The two men probably became closely acquainted while they were both serving in the Left Imperial Stables.

ingly anxious about dangers that might arise. Sadamori wandered around in circles, never straying from the area, and kept himself well hidden by remaining deep in the mountains. Looking heavenward, he reflected upon the turmoil of the times; while lying on the ground at rest, he bemoaned his continuing struggle to stay alive. Sad, distressed, and disgusted with himself, Sadamori still could not bring himself to take his own life.

When he heard the noisy call of birds, Sadamori suspected that he was hearing the howling voices of the enemy; each time he saw the grasses move, he feared that it was an approaching spy. In this way, Sadamori spent many days and months in misery and anguish. But finally there came no sounds of war to disturb his heart, and the constant anxiety that had earlier plagued him eventually subsided.

Now, back in the spring of Jōhei 8 in the middle of the Second Month, the provisional governor of Musashi, Prince Okiyo,[122] and the vice-governor of Musashi, Minamoto no Tsunemoto,[123] had been having a dispute with Musashi no Takeshiba,[124] who was the district magistrate of Adachi and a provincial administrator, over the issue of misgovernment in Musashi. It has been said that provincial governors make the corruption of the law their practice, while district magistrates base their strength upon following upright principles. The case of District Magistrate Takeshiba is an example that bears out this notion. Year after year he carefully attended to his public duties, winning praise and never drawing criticism. Indeed, his reputation for good government had become

[122] Okiyo no Ōkimi was evidently of noble birth, but his lineage is uncertain. His tenure as provisional governor was for the interim period between the administrations of Fujiwara no Korechika (see p. 104, n. 143, below), who left the governorship of Musashi prematurely in 938, and Kudara no Sadatsura (see p. 103, n. 138, below), who was appointed to that post in the Fifth Month, Tengyō 2 (939).

[123] 916–961?, the eldest son of Sadazumi Shinnō and the founder of the Seiwa Genji family. An outstanding military figure, Tsunemoto played an active role in putting down the Masakado and Sumitomo uprisings in 940 and 941, respectively, and later held various prestigious posts, including that of commander-in-chief of the Northeastern Defense Headquarters.

[124] The son of Musashi no Takenari, from whom he took over the position of *gunji* (district magistrate) of Adachi. Takeshiba served concurrently as a provincial administrator (*hangandai*), a civil-service position in the provincial government. The *hangandai* may have handled the drafting of documents and other paperwork or assisted with the administration of paddy-land and the collection of taxes.

established throughout the province, his benevolent concern for the citizenry felt by all.

Past generations of provincial governors serving throughout the land never pressed the people in the districts for the payment of unpaid taxes, nor did they rebuke the taxpayer for tardy remittance. But this provisional governor, Prince Okiyo, tried to force his way into the district of Adachi, which was under Takeshiba's jurisdiction, before the regular appointed governor had arrived to take up his post.[125] When Takeshiba investigated the matter, he found that there was no precedent in Musashi for so brash an action as this. The provisional governor, for his part, roundly criticized the district magistrate for his disregard for protocol, willfully ordered up his army, and forced his way into the district. Takeshiba went into hiding in the mountains for some time because he feared that a legal dispute with Okiyo would arise.

Just as he had planned, Prince Okiyo proceeded to sack a number of Takeshiba's houses and those belonging to persons closely connected to him. After stripping these dwellings of all their contents, he searched and sealed off the remaining village houses, but left them intact, and then departed from the area.

From the actions of Okiyo and Tsunemoto, it would appear that they had embraced the ways of Chung-ho [according to *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, Chung-ho was a prefect who imposed heavy taxes; he coveted wealth and bled the province to obtain it],[126] while their followers had the hearts of bandits. Those two leaders, Okiyo and Tsunemoto, worked together like a pair of chopsticks, scheming to break the bones of the common people and squeeze the oil from their flesh. Their underlings shared in the plunder like a swarm of ants, their

[125] Okiyo probably entered the district of Adachi to collect overdue taxes payable in grain. Although it was actually in keeping with the law for Okiyo, then provisional governor, to go into Adachi to collect taxes or investigate the storehouses there, the language of the text suggests that he took advantage of his final days in office to force Takeshiba to pay taxes in arrears, most likely for the purpose of enriching himself. See Takeuchi, p. 480.

[126] Chung-ho is the courtesy name of Li Sheng, a disreputable prefect who is said to have served during the reign of Emperor Hsiao Huan, r. 147–168, of the Later Han dynasty. His harsh and rapacious ways are parodied in *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, a provincial history written during the Eastern Chin dynasty. As is often the case with citations from Chinese sources in *Shōmonki*, the author does not reproduce verbatim the passage from *Hua-yang kuo-chih*, 1, p. 5b, which reads: 'During the reign of Emperor Hsiao Huan, Li Sheng, [courtesy name] Chung-ho, of Honan, while serving as a prefect, coveted wealth and imposed heavy taxes. . . . '

minds bent on laying their hands on the loot and stealthily carrying it off.

From just a glance at the conditions of deprivation in the province, it was evident that the people were greatly suffering. Therefore, following the procedure established in the Echigo case, the clerks in the provincial offices drew up a document exhorting their superiors to renounce the failures of their administration.[127] This was dropped in front of the Musashi provincial offices and the exact nature of the situation soon became known to people throughout the province.[128]

Although Takeshiba had served as district magistrate for many years, there had never been a single rumor of graft concerning him. He repeatedly issued written appeals asking that all stolen property be returned to its owners, but Okiyo did nothing to make amends.[129] Instead, Okiyo and Tsunemoto spared no effort in their preparations to do battle with Takeshiba.

Just at this time, Masakado received an urgent report about these happenings and he told his followers:

'I am indeed not a close relative of Takeshiba, and Provisional Governor Okiyo and Vice-Governor Tsunemoto are not my brothers. Still, I will go to Musashi and try to settle the dispute between them.'

Thereupon, Masakado set out with his men and in due course they arrived at Takeshiba's place of hiding in the bush. Takeshiba explained to Masakado that Provisional Governor Okiyo and Vice-Governor Tsunemoto had energetically readied their weapons for battle and had gone up Mt Sayaki in Hiki district, taking their wives and children with them.[130] Masakado and Takeshiba then departed for the Musashi provincial offices.

[127] The nature of this precedent in Echigo is not known. Kajihara speculates that it may have involved a struggle between the governor of Echigo, Ki no Ariyo, and Fujiwara no Arinori, the occurrence of which is recorded in *Nihon Kiryaku* for Engi 2(902).9.20 (in DNS, I. 3, p. 98). Kajihara (7), I, p. 301. The passage relates that Ariyo had his hair sheared off and was manacled by Arinori, and that an investigator was dispatched from the capital to look into the incident.

[128] Protests of this kind were written anonymously and dropped or casually displayed in public places.

[129] The stolen property mentioned here had been taken from the houses of Takeshiba and his supporters.

[130] The whereabouts of Mt Sayaki is uncertain. It has been identified with Sayama, a hilly area spanning several miles to the south of Sayama-shi in Saitama prefecture. Akagi (3), pp. 205–08. The problem with this identification

Meanwhile, Provisional Governor Okiyo left his mountain hiding place and went to the provincial offices, setting out in advance of Masakado and Takeshiba. Vice-Governor Tsunemoto remained in hiding on the mountain. In the course of Masakado's efforts to bring about a reconciliation between Prince Okiyo and Takeshiba the three men consumed many cups of wine, all the while engaging in lively and intimate banter with each other.

But while the three of them were talking together, Takeshiba's rearguard surrounded Tsunemoto's encampment without any provocation. As Vice-Governor Tsunemoto was not yet skilled in the Way of the Warrior, his men panicked and fled in all directions. Word of this rout immediately reached the Musashi provincial offices. Masakado's attempt to put an end to the violent discord between Okiyo and Takeshiba was thus thwarted by the action of Takeshiba's men, so he returned to his village in Toyota, while Prince Okiyo remained behind in the provincial offices.

Tsunemoto began to suspect that Masakado and Provincial Governor Okiyo had been incited by District Magistrate Takeshiba to join a conspiracy to kill him. Deeply embittered, he fled in haste to the capital where, in order to get revenge on Masakado and Okiyo, he fabricated a story before the authorities in the Council of State to the effect that the three men were plotting to rebel against the state.[131] This report sent a shock wave through the capital, and outlying towns were also thrown into an uproar.

A directive[132] was issued through Taji no Mahito no Sukemasa,[133]

is that it places Mt Sayama in old Iruma district and not in Hiki as the text specifies.

[131] The crime of *muhon*, revolution against the state, was the first of the eight great crimes recognized under *ritsuryō* law. In the original code of laws, this crime was called *muhen*, and the third of the eight crimes involving less traitorous acts was called *muhon*. Later in the Heian period the term *muhon* came to designate the crime of revolution. Inoue *et al.*, p. 489, n. 6f.

Teishin-kō Kishō for Tengyō 2(939).3.3 and *Honchō Seiki* for Tengyō 2.6.7 record Tsunemoto's secret report to the authorities. DNS I. 7, p. 422.

Any person having knowledge that an act of revolution was being plotted or carried out was required by law to file a confidential report (*mikkoku*) to that effect on pain of death. The filing of false reports was also punishable by death, but it is doubtful that the punishment was often carried out. Tsunemoto went to jail for a short time after Masakado denied the charges made in the report, but he evidently did not suffer a more severe penalty for making false accusations. See p. 103, n. 136, below.

[132] *Migyōjo*, a document written by a steward (*keishi*) to convey the will of his lord, typically a regent or courtier of the third rank or above.

junior secretary of the Empress's Household Office, on the 25th day, Third Month, Tengyō 2, and reached Masakado on the 28th day of the same month.[134] It instructed him to make a statement to his personal lord, the chancellor,[135] either admitting or denying the charges. Masakado accordingly secured documents supporting his case from the five provinces of Hitachi, Shimōsa, Shimotsuke, Musashi, and Kōzuke, and issued a statement dated the 2nd day of the Fifth Month of that year, denying that there was any basis whatever for the charge.[136]

Meanwhile, in the early part of the Sixth Month, Vice-Governor Yoshikane no Ason received the tonsure while laid low by an illness, and then died.[137] Thereafter nothing eventful happened for a while.

Around the same time, the provisional governor of Musashi, Prince Okiyo, and the newly appointed governor, Kudara no Sadatsura,[138] were getting along badly with each other, and, although they were related by marriage, Sadatsura utterly refused to allow Okiyo to have a seat at the provincial government meetings. Taking umbrage, Okiyo sought refuge in Shimōsa.[139]

[133] 多治真人助真. *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* has Taji no Suketada 多治助直. The *kabane* rank of *mahito* was the first of the eight hereditary titles established in 685. Sukemasa (or Suketada) was evidently serving as Tadahira's *keishi* when this *migyōjo* was drawn up. *Shōmonki* identifies him as junior secretary of the Empress's Household (*chūgū no shōshin*), a position that he appears to have held concurrently with the *keishi* post.

[134] *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* lacks this date. It seems unlikely that the document could have reached Masakado in only three days.

[135] A reference to Fujiwara no Tadahira, 880–949, son of Mototsune, d. 891. Tadahira held the office of chancellor (*daijō daijin*) from 936 and served as regent (*sesshō/kampaku*) for his nephews emperors Suzaku and Murakami from 930 to 949. Later, in a letter to Tadahira, Masakado writes: 'Several decades have passed since I registered in Your Excellency's service in my youth,' (see p. 116, below). It is not known for how long, or in what capacity, Masakado served Tadahira.

[136] On Tengyō 2(939).6.9, just over a month after Masakado sent this denial, Minamoto no Tsunemoto was ordered incarcerated in the Left Gate Guards (*saemonfu*) for making what seemed at the time to be a false report. DNS, I. 7, p. 457. He was later exonerated and rewarded.

[137] This is the second obituary for Yoshikane and is believed to provide the correct date of his death. The first obituary, given on p. 98, above, erroneously dates his death one year earlier.

[138] Sadatsura was appointed to the post of governor of Musashi on Tengyō 2(939).5.17. *Ruijū Fusen Shō*, 8, in *Kokushi Taikei*, XXVII, p. 212. At that time, Sadatsura was finishing his term as governor of Kazusa.

[139] Okiyo is believed to have sought asylum in Masakado's Iwai residence in Shimōsa.

Back at the court, discussion was underway whether there should be an official review of Masakado's record, in light of the letters of commendation that had been forwarded by the five provincial administrations.[140] The fortunate outcome was that Masakado received the favor of officials throughout the country, and for a time he enjoyed a high reputation far and wide.

Now there was a man named Fujiwara no Haruaki[141] who lived in Hitachi. He had long been known in the province as a ruffian, the bane of its citizenry. During the harvesting season, he would greedily seize a full *chō* of rice land, and as for taxes, he would not pay a single bundle of the grain due.[142] He was not only given to bullying the provincial inspector when pressed for payment of taxes but he also extorted property from powerless common folk by intimidation. He behavior was more terrible than that of barbarians, his principles no higher than those of common thieves. Fujiwara no Korechika no Ason,[143] vice-governor of Hitachi, sent letters to Haruaki repeatedly, demanding payment of taxes. But Haruaki continued to defy the authorities and never bothered to go to the provincial offices to settle his accounts. Heedless of public authority, he willfully committed acts of savage evil, and in his private life he tyrannized the people of the province.

[140] 'Letters of commendation' (*zenjō*) were written by local citizens and forwarded to the central government to be used during the Official Review of Performance (*kōka*), which was held in the Eighth Month. *Shōmonki*'s mention of an official review of Masakado's record is puzzling insofar as the text gives no clear indication that Masakado held a government post.

[141] Biography unknown. According to *Shōmonki*, Haruaki was a follower of Masakado, but when and for what reasons the two became allied is not known.

[142] A *chō* was a square section of land having an area of about 1.5 acres. According to the Land Allotment Laws (*handen shūju no hō*) of the Taika Reform, 645–650, one *chō* was equivalent to the official allotments for five men.

[143] A descendant of Fujiwara no Muchimaro, d. 737, the founder of the Nanke branch of the Fujiwara. It appears that Korechika was appointed to the Hitachi post in the First Month of Tengyō 1 (938) after previously serving as governor of Musashi. Korechika took up the Musashi post in Jōhei 6 (936) but for some reason did not finish his term, being replaced by Okiyo some time late in Jōhei 7 (937) or early in Tengyō 1 (938).

Hitachi was one of the three eastern provinces (the other two being Kazusa and Kōzuke) that, from 826, were assigned the status of *shinnō ninkoku*, 'a province entrusted to an imperial prince'. Imperial princes assigned to these provinces did not, as a rule, proceed to their provincial posts but merely enjoyed the perquisites and stipends that came with the office. In all the *shinnō ninkoku* provinces, the vice-governor served on location as de facto governor.

Little by little Vice-Governor Korechika drew up a list of Haruaki's many offenses and, in obedience to the edict issued by the Council of State, he made efforts to have him apprehended.[144] But in the meantime Haruaki fled with his wife and children to Toyota district in Shimōsa.[145] Local records submitted to the authorities by district magistrates note many instances of Haruaki's looting rice[146] from emergency granaries in the districts of Namekata and Kōchi while he was en route to Toyota.

A warrant for his arrest was then sent to the Shimōsa provincial offices and to Masakado. But Masakado continually maintained that Haruaki had already absconded, and he showed no intention of arresting him and turning him over to the authorities.

In Hitachi, Haruaki was a public enemy of long standing, having committed outrages throughout the province's many districts. To enrich his wife and children, he was constantly robbing travelers, and to reward his followers, he often stole citizens' valuables. Masakado was by nature the kind of man who gave assistance and encouragement to the lonely and forlorn, looking after them and lending support to those with no one else to turn to. At the time, Haruaki had long been harboring a deep malice and venomous hatred toward Korechika no Ason. One moment he wanted to assassinate him secretly, but the next moment he preferred the idea of challenging him openly to all-out battle. So Haruaki asked Masakado what he thought of his idea of fighting Korechika, and Masakado seemed willing to cooperate.

Having won Masakado's support, Haruaki became all the more unruly and fierce. He proceeded to make all the necessary preparations for battle and completed secret arrangements with Masakado and others. Masakado and his men gathered arms from around the province and recruited additional soldiers from outside as well. On the 21st day, Eleventh Month, Tengyō 2, Masakado's army crossed over the border into Hitachi. The Hitachi government had prepared its defenses in advance and was awaiting his arrival.

[144] It is not certain which edict this was. *Teishin-kō Kishō*, for Tengyō 2(939). 5.5, records that Regent Fujiwara no Tadahira ordered that an edict be issued to the eight provincial governments in the east condemning the disorder prevailing there and commanding that prayer offerings be made to enlist the gods' help in quieting the unrest. Perhaps this is the edict in question. DNS, I. 7, p. 499.

[145] According to *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, Haruaki 'became a follower of Masakado.' Presumably Haruaki took up residence in Iwai at or near to Masakado's residence.

[146] *Momi hoshi-ii*, literally 'unhulled rice and dried boiled rice', both of which were important storage grains.

When Masakado reached the provincial offices,[147] he announced that he was presenting to the officials a written request that Haruaki should be allowed to take up residence in Hitachi and that he should not be apprehended by the authorities. The Hitachi officials sent a reply saying that his request would not be granted and that they were prepared to fight him. Thereupon the two sides engaged in battle, in the course of which all three thousand of the government soldiers were killed.

Masakado had only a thousand or so men under his command. They surrounded the provincial offices and blocked the east and west exits. By this time Vice-Governor Korechika had already surrendered, offering a written confession of wrongdoing, while the imperial envoy, too, submitted to Masakado's demands, bowing in humble fashion.[148] Rolls of highly prized sheer silk and figured cloth were distributed to the people in quantities as vast as the clouds above, while exquisite and rare treasures were carelessly dispersed among the masses like spilt counting sticks. Thousands of bolts of silk[149] were seized by 'the five owners' of all things, and the smoke from the kitchen fires in more than three hundred homes became the smoke of raging fire in an instant.

Women as lovely as Hsi Shih,[150] who is depicted in screen paintings, suffered the shame of being roughly stripped naked; both monks and laymen living in the provincial capital were brutally beaten to the point of death. Saddles engraved with gold and silver and small boxes inlaid with lapis lazuli—what vast quantities of these were lost! Provisions and valuables from a number of houses were looted—but by whom? Monks and nuns from the state-spon-

147 Here I have followed *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, which reads: *Sunawachi Masakado itarite iwaku. . . .* 便将門到云. The *Shimpukuji-bon* version has *Masakado nobete iwaku* 将門陳云, 'Masakado said . . . ,' without a verb indicating his arrival at the provincial offices. The Hitachi provincial offices were located at the site of what is now Ishioka Shōgakkō in the eastern part of the city of Ishioka in Ibaraki.

148 This imperial envoy, *shōshi*, was actually a *kōtaishi*, an official dispatched to the provinces by the central government to assist in the transition to a new administration for a period of four to six months. According to *Honchō Seiki*, Fujiwara no Sadatō was appointed Hitachi *kōtaishi* on Tengyō 2 (939).6.4. DNS, I. 7, p. 452. 'Masakado's demands' probably refers to his original request that Haruaki be allowed to take up residence in Hitachi and that he not be apprehended by the authorities.

149 The number 15,000 appears here, but as in the case of all large numbers in the text, it need not be taken literally.

150 Hsi Shih, fl. 5th century B.C., was one of China's most renowned beauties.

sored temples[151] begged lowly soldiers to spare their ephemeral lives, and the few gentlemen and ladies[152] who had managed to survive were made to suffer cruel humiliation. What a pitiful figure Vice-Governor Korechika cut as he wiped away his bitter tears with the sleeves of his crimson robe.[153] And how sad to see government officials going down on both knees in the mud!

The sun set in the west, bringing to a close that day of boundless evil; the following morning, too, was marked by lawless excesses when Masakado seized the official seals and keys. Following this, Vice-Governor Korechika and the imperial envoy were expelled from the provincial offices and led away. The clerks who remained behind there wailed in sorrow, while Korechika's soldiers wandered along the roadside in a daze.

On the 29th, Masakado and his men returned to the Kamawa headquarters in Toyota district. The vice-governor and the imperial envoy were placed under arrest; although they received merciful treatment, they were unable to eat or sleep for worry.

One day Provisional Governor Prince Okiyo secretly approached Masakado with a proposal, which he persuasively put to him as follows:

'Having thought about the situation, I believe that conquering even one province is sure to bring about much official condemnation. You might just as well take over all the Bandō provinces and wait for awhile to see what happens.'[154]

Masakado replied:

'This is precisely what I have in mind. After all, in ancient times Prince Pan Tzu wanted to assume the king's throne and began by decapitating one thousand kings.[155] Another prince who wanted to

[151] The Kokubunji and Kokubunniji (Provincial Temple and Provincial Nunnery, respectively) of Hitachi, located near the provincial offices.

[152] *Shijo*, men and women of respectable status, perhaps refers to public officials and their wives.

[153] According to *Sompi Bummyaku*, Korechika held the junior fifth rank, upper grade, as vice-governor of Hitachi, a rank that would have entitled him to wear light red. *Kokushi Taikei*, LIX, p. 497. See p. 96, n. 111, above.

[154] The area known as the Bandō covered the eight Tōkaidō provinces east of the Ashigara and Usui barriers (see p. 118, n. 204, below): Sagami, Musashi, Kazusa, Shimōsa, Hitachi, Kōzuke, Shimotsuke, and Mutsu. Dewa and Awa are also sometimes included in the list.

[155] Skt. Kalmāṣapāda, a lengendary Indian king of the fabulous country of Devala. As heir to the throne, Pan Tzu was advised by a heretic to decapitate a thousand kings and offer their heads in sacrifice to the ancestral gods in order that

seize his father's throne had him thrown into a prison surrounded by seven walls.[156] May I venture to say that I, Masakado, am a third-generation descendant of a man of royal blood.[157] If it is all the same no matter how much territory I conquer, I'll start with the eight Bandō provinces and then eventually capture the imperial capital as well. Now I must first seize the official seals and keys of the administrations throughout the eight provinces, and then drive out all the governors, sending them back to the capital. Once this has been accomplished, I shall have the eight provinces in the palm of my hand and the people will be on my side.'

With these words, their fateful discussion came to an end.

Masakado set out once again in command of several thousand soldiers, crossing the border into Shimotsuke province on the 11th day, Twelfth Month, Tengyō 2. Each of his warriors rode a dragon-like mount and led a band of soldiers as numerous as the clouds.[158] Brandishing whips, they spurred their steeds on as if ready to cross ten thousand *li* of mountains. Stouthearted and in high spirits, they were determined to defeat one hundred thousand of the enemy. After proceeding to the provincial offices, the men formed ranks in a show of strength.

Realizing that Masakado was resolved to take over the province by force, Fujiwara no Kimmasa,[159] the newly appointed governor, and Ōnakatomi no Matayuki no Ason,[160] the former governor, knelt down on the ground, prostrated themselves twice before Masakado,

he might himself become king. According to the legend, the last of the kings captured by Pan Tzu succeeded in converting to Buddhism the other 999 kings in captivity and even Pan Tzu himself, who then decided to free all the kings. *Daizōkyō*, VIII, p. 830.1–2.

156 A reference to Ajātaśatru. See p. 80, n. 38, above.

157 Prince Takamochi, Masakado's grandfather and the grandson of Emperor Kammu, is undoubtedly the royal personage alluded to here.

158 The locus classicus for this horse/dragon identification is *Chou li*, 8, p. 23b, which states: 'A horse over eight *ch'ih* in height is called a *lung*; one that is over seven *ch'ih*, a *lai*; and one over six *ch'ih*, a *ma*.' The *lung* was the largest of horses.

159 藤原公雅. *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, *Nihon Kiryaku*, *Honchō Seiki*, and *Fusō Ryakki* all call him Fujiwara no Hiromasa 藤原弘雅, and this name is thought to be correct. Hiromasa was the son of Harushige and the great-great-grandson of Washitori. At the time of Masakado's takeover, he was the incoming governor of Shimotsuke and was present in the government offices arranging the change of administrations.

160 大中臣全行朝臣. *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon* and *Honchō Seiki* write his given name as Matayuki 完行, and this is believed to be correct. He was the eldest son of Yasunori, d. 928, and a fifth-generation descendant of Minister of the Right (*udaijin*) Kiyomaro, d. 788. He served as governor of Shimotsuke from 935 to 939.

and respectfully presented him with the seals and keys of office. In the subsequent commotion, all the government buildings and surrounding areas were captured. Masakado then dispatched an intelligent and able deputy to escort the governor back to the capital.[161]

In his distress, the governor exclaimed:

'There are five aspects of death in the heavenly world,[162] and eight kinds of suffering in the human world.[163] So how could I possibly have avoided suffering on this day?[164] Times change and society is transformed; the world no longer observes the laws of morality. Goodness yields before the forces of evil, and Buddha and the gods lack the power to remedy the situation.[165] Oh, the pity of it all! Although the diviner's chicken bones were not yet old, they flew away to the west;[166] the soothsayer's tortoise shell was still quite

[161] *Nihon Kiryaku*, for Tengyō 2(939).12.29, says that Masakado assigned a soldier to take the vice-governor of Kōzuke, Fujiwara no Hisanori (see p. 111, n. 170, below), the governor of Shimotsuke, Fujiwara no Hiromasa, and the former governor of Shimotsuke, Ōnakatomi no Matayuki, back to the capital after they had been ousted from office. DNS, I. 7, p. 599.

[162] According to Buddhist thought, the 'heavenly world' (*ten* or *tendō*) is the highest of six paths (*rokudō*) of metempsychosis between which the souls of all living beings transmigrate. Even the virtuous inhabitants of this realm are thought to be unable to escape the unpleasantness of spiritual and physical decline and, inevitably, death itself. Hence the phrase, 'There are five aspects of death in the heavenly world,' where 'five aspects' denotes the five signs of approaching death. These include the soiling of one's clothing, giving off a foul odor from the body, sweating under the arms, etc. *Daizōkyō*, XII, p. 478.1.

[163] The 'human world' (*jinkai*) is the second of the six paths of metempsychosis. The eight kinds of human suffering include the suffering of birth, illness, old age, etc. *Daizōkyō*, XII, p. 685.1.

[164] It is possible that the governor's speech ends here or else after the words, 'Oh, the pity of it!' three sentences further on. However, the note at the end of this paragraph, which comments on the meaning of the governor's words, appears to indicate that his lines continue down to where the note is found. This uncertainty over the length of his lines would not have arisen had the scribe remembered to insert the character 者, used to mark the end of a quotation in Japanese *kambun*.

[165] The sentiment expressed here is related to certain prophecies about the decline of Buddhism in the period of *mappō*, the Latter Age of the Law or the degenerate age of the Buddhist law. This passage in *Shōmonki* appears to be one of the earliest examples of *mappō* philosophy in secular Japanese writings.

[166] 'Chicken bones' is actually *keigi*, 'chicken instrument or apparatus' in the text; no other example of this word is known. Kajihara speculates that *keigi* may refer to chicken bones, which, like tortoise shells and deer shoulder blades, were

new, but it disappeared on the eastern shore.'[167] [That is to say, the governor encountered misfortune while in office.]

Ladies and children accustomed to riding in carriages behind protective screens now had to abandon their vehicles and trudge on foot along frost-covered roads; soldiers living outside the government gates had to leave their horses and make their own way up snow-laden hills.

In the early years of Matayuki's administration, smiles of goodwill brightened everyone's face,[168] but in the final climactic days of his tenure, people wrung their hands in despair. The four annual reports had been seized, and the former governor had to return to the court empty-handed.[169] The new governor's rice stipend for his term in office had also been stolen, and he journeyed wearily back to the capital, filled with a sense of futility.

Public officials and private citizens of Shimotsuke knitted their brows and shed tears in distress, while in neighboring provinces, men and women raised their voices in cries of sympathy. Previously all the news had been about the misfortunes of others, but now the people of Shimotsuke themselves had to suffer humiliation. Even a glance at the conditions there would show that nowhere in the world were turmoil and destitution more extreme than in Shimotsuke.

used in ancient Japanese divination. Kajihara (7), II, p. 69.

The delphic line, 'The chicken bones . . . flew away to the west,' may mean that the tools of divination—indispensable accessories of government and symbols of official authority—were seized by Masakado when he took over the government.

[167] The practice of divining with the shell of a tortoise (*kikkō*) was common among the ancient Chinese and Mongols and, to a lesser extent, among the Japanese. The phrase 'the eastern shores' may perhaps have been intended as a word association, or *engo*, for *kikkō*, for it vaguely suggests the watery dwelling place of the tortoise, as in the following passage from *Chin shu*, 81, p. 9b: 'The white tortoise which he had raised was five or six feet in length. It carried him across to the eastern shore [of the Chiang-tzu River].'

[168] More literally translated, '. . . [the people's faces] were dimpled [with smiles] showing [a friendship as strong as] iron and [as fragrant as] orchids.' For the locus classicus of *kinran*, 'iron [-strong] and [fragrant as] orchids', see *Chou i*, 7, p. 6a, which reads: 'When two men are one in heart, not iron bolts keep them apart. The words they in their unison use, fragrance like orchid plants diffuse.' Legge (1), p. 362.

[169] The four annual reports (*yodo no kumon*) were the *shōzei-chō* (provincial budget report), the *daikei-chō* (register of households providing tribute and corvée), the *kōchō-chō* (tax report), and the *chōshū-chō* (political performance report). These reports were supposed to be collected annually by official envoys called *yodo no tsukai*.

Moaning in distress, the new governor and the former one arrived back in the capital via the Tōsandō Road, thus ending the journey that Masakado had forced them to make.

Masakado entered Kōzuke province on the 15th day of the same month, whereupon Fujiwara no Hisanori no Ason, vice-governor of Kōzuke,[170] had his official seals and keys taken from him and on the 19th was sent back to the capital in the custody of a deputy assigned by Masakado.[171] Masakado then occupied the provincial offices and entered the buildings.[172] He stationed guards at each of the four gates and held a ceremony for provincial appointments.[173] During the proceedings, a shamaness appeared and uttered the following statement:[174]

'I am a messenger of the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman.[175] I[176]

[170] Kōzuke no suke Fujiwara no Hisanori no Ason, according to *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon. Shimpukuji-bon* erroneously gives Shimotsuke as Hisanori's province of appointment. Kōzuke was a *shinnō ninkoku* province, which means that Hisanori, as vice-governor, was the de facto chief executive of the provincial government. Hisanori was the fourth son of Fujiwara no Toshitsune and a descendant of Nagara, d. 856.

[171] Hisanori and two other officials set out for the capital under escort on Tengyō 2(939).12.29. See p. 109, n. 161, above.

[172] The Kōzuke provincial government (*kokufu*) was located in former Gumma district. The site of the provincial offices was to the west of the Motosōja Shrine in modern Maebashi-shi in Gumma.

[173] Masakado made appointments to provincial government posts in the Bandō almost a month before official appointments to those posts were to have been made. The provincial appointment ceremony (*agata-meshi no jimoku*) was traditionally carried out in the spring between the 11th and 13th days of the First Month. The names of Masakado's appointees to provincial posts are found on pp. 119–20, below. On the following page there is an additional list of posts in Masakado's 'central government' to which further appointments were supposedly made.

[174] Shamanesses (*kannagi*) played an important role in ancient Japanese military life. They delivered oracles, entertained the soldiers with music and dance, and performed routine divinations before the troops went into battle.

[175] Hachiman Dai-bosatsu is said to be the deified spirit of Emperor Ōjin (supposed period of reign, 270–310) and is second in importance only to Amaterasu Ōmikami, the sun goddess, in the Shinto pantheon. Hachiman came to be regarded as a native manifestation of Amida Buddha and had the title Dai-bosatsu (Great Bodhisattva) conferred upon him during the period 764–781. Hachiman is known for his oracles, the most famous of which was the one in 769 that declared Chancellor-Priest Dōkyō, an aspirant to the throne, ineligible to become emperor owing to his non-imperial lineage.

[176] *Chin*, the first-person pronoun conventionally used by emperors, is found here. The god Hachiman, as the spirit of Emperor Ōjin, is speaking in the first person through the mouth of the shamaness medium.

hereby confer upon my son[177] Masakado the title of emperor.[178] The spirit of Minister of the Right Sugawara no Ason,[179] holder of the senior second rank, has presented in writing the Certificate of Conferment of Rank wherein are written these words:[180] "The aforesaid great Bodhisattva Hachiman hereby calls together eighty thousand soldiers and confers upon Masakado the title of emperor."[181] With the Hymn of the Thirty-Two Signs, we must welcome the emperor without delay.'[182]

Thereupon Masakado raised the Certificate of Conferment of Rank above his head and twice did obeisance. Needless to say, the guards stationed at the various gates all rose to their feet and cheered, while several thousand soldiers prostrated themselves in unison before Masakado. The provisional governor of Musashi, Prince Okiyo, and the secretary of Hitachi, Fujiwara no Haru-

[177] *Onshi*, a term used to designate the sons of government officials holding the fifth rank or higher. *Onshi* were entitled to inherit rank upon entrance into the bureaucracy at the age of twenty-one. By referring to Masakado as the *onshi* of Hachiman, alias Emperor Ōjin, *Shōmonki* casts him in the role of heir apparent.

[178] *Chin ga i*, literally 'my [imperial] throne'.

[179] A reference to Sugawara no Michizane, 845–903, son of Koreyoshi, d. 880, and member of a family of scholars and literati. While serving as minister of the right, Michizane incurred the disfavor of Emperor Daigo, r. 897–930, who was led to believe by the Fujiwara that Michizane was plotting to replace him with his own son-in-law. In 901, Michizane was exiled to Kyushu, where he died. A series of misfortunes that befell the Fujiwara after his death were attributed to his wrathful spirit.

At the time *Shōmonki* was written, Michizane had the status of minister of the right, senior second rank. Although this is correctly noted in *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*, which has been followed here, *Shimpukuji-bon* makes him the minister of the left (*sadaijin*), the position to which he was posthumously promoted in 993.

[180] By having Masakado confirmed as 'New Emperor' by a divine authority, namely Hachiman, *Shōmonki* attempts to provide religious sanction for Masakado's claim to imperial power. The presentation of a 'certificate of conferment of rank' to him seems both farcical and implausible, since legitimate sovereigns, both supreme and inviolable, were never confirmed in their throne by such a document.

[181] The number *hachiman*, eighty thousand, is homophonous with the name of the god Hachiman and would therefore seem to be in the text for rhetorical effect. Here the number is intended only to denote a vast quantity.

[182] A devotional chart of the Pure Land sect, the Hymn of the Thirty-Two Signs (*sanjūni sōgaku*) lists the thirty-two special physical traits of a *cakravartī* (a supreme ruler whose chariot wheels roll everywhere without hindrance), especially of the Buddha, whose teachings and realm are universal—for example, level feet, long slender fingers, dark blue eyes, etc. Soothill & Hodous, pp. 60 & 445.

mochi,[183] who were Masakado's chief ministers at the time, were as joyful as two paupers who had suddenly come upon a fortune. Their faces broadened into smiles as wide as lilies in full bloom. Then they bestowed on Masakado an honorary title[184] of their own choosing: they named him 'The New Emperor'.

Masakado drafted a letter to Fujiwara no Tadahira reporting these developments. It read as follows:

> I, Masakado, venture to address you. Many years have passed since I last received the benefit of your counsel. I have been longing to see you again, but I hardly know how to explain what has happened, as recent developments have been so unexpected. I should be deeply grateful if you would favor me with your exalted understanding and indulgence. I was summoned to the capital a few years ago on account of a suit filed by Minamoto no Mamoru.[185] Awed by this summons, I set out in haste. But when I presented myself before the authorities, they informed me that I had been pardoned and would be sent back to Shimōsa without delay. I then returned to my village and thought no more about military matters; loosening my bowstring, I led a peaceful life.
>
> In the meantime, however, Taira no Yoshikane, the former vice-governor of Shimōsa, mobilized an army numbering several thousand men and proceeded to attack me. I could not very well turn my back and flee, and I was obliged to defend myself.[186] In the course of the fighting, a number of my men were killed by Yoshikane's forces, my people were taken prisoner, and personal property was seized.

[183] A native of Hitachi, Harumochi may have been a relative of Fujiwara no Haruaki, also of Hitachi. Kajihara (7), II, p. 98.

Harumochi was probably serving as junior secretary of Hitachi (*Hitachi no shōjō*) at the time of Masakado's attack, although he is not mentioned earlier in the text in connection with that event. The circumstances of Harumochi's apparent defection to Masakado's side are not explained in *Shōmonki*. Masakado later appointed him vice-governor of Hitachi.

[184] *Shigō* 諡号, 'posthumous epithet', is probably an error for *imina* 諡, donating here an 'honorary name' used in place of a person's real name, or *jitsumyō*. I have corrected the text and translated accordingly.

[185] A reference to the summons issued in Jōhei 5(935).12.29 and brought to Hitachi, Shimotsuke, and Shimōsa by three imperial messengers in the Ninth Month of the following year. See pp. 83–84, above.

[186] A reference to the battle that took place at Kogai Ford on Jōhei 7(937).8.6. See pp. 86–87, above.

This incident was reported in full detail to the Council of State in a report written by the Shimōsa government. The court responded by ordering the provinces to cooperate in apprehending Yoshikane and the others, and the matter rested at that.[187] But no sooner had that warrant been issued than a messenger was dispatched to summon me once more to the capital. Receiving this second summons disturbed me greatly, so I finally did not go and instead explained my situation fully to Anaho no Tomoyuki, the bearer of the summons. Thus the matter rested there.[188]

News of the court ruling had not yet arrived, however, and I was feeling most depressed over the matter when Taira no Sadamori came to Hitachi in the summer of that year, bearing a Council of State edict summoning me to the capital, just as before.[189] Subsequently various provincial officials sent me notices of this summons time after time.

Now, the said Sadamori eluded his pursuers and stole back to the capital. Although the authorities ought to have apprehended and interrogated him, on the contrary they have issued this edict against me, thus endorsing Sadamori's charges. What a travesty of justice! Minamoto no Sukemoto no Ason, lesser controller of the right and holder of the senior fifth rank, lower grade, conveyed to me your will in a directive that stated, 'On the basis of the report made by the vice-governor of Musashi, Tsunemoto, it has already been decided that another summons be served on Masakado.'[190]

[187] The court edict calling for the arrest of Yoshikane and his cohorts did not arrive until the Eleventh Month of Jōhei 7 (937). Masakado's letter fails to mention other confrontations that he had had with Yoshikane after the battle at Kogai Ford and before the arrival of the edict; namely, the battle at Horikoshi Ford (p. 88, above) and Masakado's unsuccessful attempt to engage Yoshikane at Yubukuro Pass (p. 90, above).

[188] This second summons that Masakado claims to have been served is not mentioned elsewhere in the text. The reason for this summons is not made clear. The 'court ruling' mentioned in the following sentence was no doubt related to the incident that had led to the issuing of the second summons.

[189] This third summons was brought to the east by Sadamori in the Sixth Month, Tengyō 1 (938)—see p. 98, above. Sadamori obtained the summons after escaping capture in Shinano in the Second Month and fleeing to the capital. Sadamori, it will be recalled, was one of six men who were named in the arrest warrant of Eleventh Month, Jōhei 7 (937).

[190] Minamoto no Sukemoto no Ason, d. 943, was the third son of Minamoto no Masatoki. The lesser controller of the right (*ushōben*) was one of three officials appointed to the Right Controller's Office (*ubenkan*) under the administration of

While I was awaiting the arrival of the imperial envoy,[191] a certain Tamenori,[192] the son of the vice-governor of Hitachi, Fujiwara no Korechika no Ason, was recklessly using his official authority to indulge his fondness for maligning people. On account of the grievances of one of my followers, Fujiwara no Haruaki, I went to Hitachi to inquire into the matter.[193] Upon my arrival, Tamenori, acting in collusion with Sadamori, took command of more than three thousand elite soldiers and arbitrarily raided the provincial armory; they appropriated shields and other weapons and equipment for their own use, and then challenged me to combat.[194] At this point I urged my men to do battle, and with our strength mustered in full, we successfully overcame Tamenori's army.

During my occupation of the province, countless numbers of people perished, and surviving residents were, as was to be expected, taken prisoner by my men. In a written admission of guilt, Vice-Governor Korechika acknowledged that the trouble had arisen because he had failed to give proper guidance to his son, and the matter rested at that.

While it had not been my original intention, in the end I conquered the province of Hitachi. This was no small crime, I realized, as taking over one province was surely as grave a

the *daijōkan*. See p. 121, n. 224, below. Earlier in the text, p. 102, a different man, Taji no Sukemasa, is named as the issuer of the directive mentioned here. The summons served on Masakado as a result of the directive was evidently the fourth to be served to date.

191 *Shōshi*, referring here to a kind of special envoy, the *mommikkoku-shi*, 'investigator of confidential reports'. On Tengyō 2(939).6.7, three men were appointed *mommikkoku-shi* for the purpose of inquiring into the validity of Tsunemoto's charges. For some reason they failed to carry out the assigned task and were relieved of their commission on Tengyō 3(940).1.9. DNS, I. 7, p. 578.

192 Eldest son of Fujiwara no Korechika. Tamenori's mother was a daughter of Takamochi, which means that Tamenori and Masakado were first cousins. *Kokushi Taikei*, LIX, p. 497. It is uncertain whether or not Tamenori was holding a post in Hitachi at the time of Masakado's attack. Here Tamenori is blamed by Masakado for initiating hostilities, but he is not mentioned earlier in the text where the takeover of Hitachi is described.

193 Here for the first time Haruaki is referred to as a *jūhei* (soldier-follower) of Masakado. Close ties were evidently established between the two men after Haruaki was granted asylum by Masakado for reasons that remain unclear.

194 Neither Sadamori nor Tamenori is named in *Shōmonki* as a participant in the Hitachi conflict. Had Sadamori in fact been in Hitachi at the time, his presence there might have been a factor in Masakado's decision to enter that province with his army, since Masakado would have seen this as an ideal opportunity to apprehend Sadamori and bring him to justice.

crime as taking over a hundred. So I went on to seize the other Bandō provinces while awaiting news of the outcome of the court deliberations.

With all due respect, I should like to comment on my lineage. I am indisputably a fifth-generation descendant of Emperor Kashiwabara. Were I to gain control over half the land permanently, it would surely be admitted that this was my due fortune. Every history book tells of men who in ancient times seized control of empires by force. I have been endowed by Heaven with martial prowess; when I consider the matter, who among my peers can compare with me? And yet, far from commending me, the government had issued edicts against me.[195]

Reflecting upon my past, I find much to be ashamed about. What little honor I have brought on myself! I would be most grateful to receive your sympathy in my situation. Several decades have passed since I registered in Your Excellency's service in my youth.[196] I could not have imagined that these things would have occurred during your imperial regency and tenure as chancellor. So extreme is my regret that I know not what to say. Although I have been harboring a plan to overthrow the nation, how could I have forgotten Your Excellency, my former master? If you could only sympathize with me in these circumstances, I would be very happy. This single desire pervades the myriad words that I have written above.

With respect,

Masakado

15th day, Twelfth Month, Tengyō 2[197]
To the Honorable Chancellor and the Lesser Captain[198]

[195] Probably a reference to the numerous summonses and notices that Masakado claimed to have received.

[196] The year of Masakado's entry into the service of Tadahira is not known. Stramigioli (2), p. 83, takes several decades (*sūjūnen*) to mean twenty or thirty years, since she discovered that the suffix *sū-* 数, 'several', is generally used in *Shōmonki* to designate two or three, rather than four or five, as is normally the case. This would mean that, had Masakado entered Tadahira's household at about the age of fifteen, he would have been between thirty-five and forty-five when he wrote this letter.

[197] This date does not fit into the chronology of events narrated earlier in the text. On pp. 111 & 113, above, it was said that Masakado occupied the Kōzuke government buildings and was appointed New Emperor on the 19th day of the Twelfth Month. It was after his appointment that Masakado supposedly wrote the letter to Tadahira.

[198] The 'Honorable Chancellor' is Fujiwara no Tadahira, but the identity of the 'Lesser Captain [of the Bodyguards]' is uncertain. It is possible that the lesser

One day, Masahira,[199] the younger brother of the New Emperor, and his cohorts secretly offered Masakado the following advice:

'A man cannot compete for the imperial throne with his intellect, nor can he gain it by force.[200] From ancient times down to the present, rulers who have united Heaven and Earth and kings who have succeeded to the throne were in fact granted their positions by Heaven.[201] Thus, how can you so rashly devise a strategy of this sort? The kind of action you are planning will surely by censured by future generations. You must give up the idea!'

The New Emperor replied:

'Mastery of the bow has helped both Japan and China in the past, and skill in archery has rescued men from an otherwise short life. Unworthy though I am, I have won fame as a warrior in the Bandō provinces and my skill in battle is known in both the capital and the distant provinces. People nowadays invariably accept as their ruler a man who has achieved victory on the battlefield. Even if there is no precedent for accepting such a ruler in our country, there are cases of this happening in all the other countries of the world.

'Take, for example, the king of the great Khitans, who, on the 1st day of the First Month of a certain year in the Enchō period, conquered the kingdom of Po-hai, renamed it Tung-tan-kuo, and took over its government.[202] Is there anything that cannot be ob-

captain in question was Tadahira's fourth son, Morouji, who served in that post from 934 to 941. Hayashi (3), p. 158.

[199] The fifth of Yoshimasa's eight sons, according to *Sompi Bummyaku*. *Sōma Keizu* makes him the fourth of seven sons of Yoshimasa. Masahira is identified in *Sōma Keizu* as the governor of Kōzuke, but the years of his administration are not recorded. Masakado evidently did not appoint Masahira to a post following his conquest of the Bandō. This suggests that he had lost favor with Masakado after giving him gratuitous advice.

[200] The source of this sentence is the preface of *Ti fan*, p. 2a, which *Shōmonki* follows almost verbatim.

[201] More literally translated, '. . . rulers who made Heaven their warp and Earth their woof, and lords who inherited the great task [of ruling the state] and succeeded to the patrimony. . . . ' This phraseology, 経天緯地之君, 纂業承基之王 in the language of the original, is taken from the preface to *Ti fan*, p. 4a.

[202] 'The king of the great Khitans' is an allusion to Yeh-lü A-pao-chi, 872–926, chieftain of the Khitan Mongols of southern Manchuria, who conquered the vast state of Po-hai, 713–926, in 926. A-pao-chi succeeded in subduing Po-hai by the Second Month of 926 and renamed the conquered land Tung-tan (J. Tōtan) on the 19th day of the Second Month. See *Liao shih*, 2, p. 6b. The date given in *Shōmonki* for these events is obviously fictitious. The Enchō period lasted from 923–931.

tained by military force? Furthermore, we have the support of a multitude of men and the experience of past success in battle. My dauntless spirit can carry me over mountain tops and my unfailing strength can smash cliffs of rock. My determination to be victorious in battle is so strong that I could overcome even the army of Kao-tsu![203]

'While we are in the process of taking over the eight provinces, we will defend the Bandō region by fortifying our defenses at the Ashigara and Usui barriers in case the imperial forces launch a counterattack.[204] These are the facts of the matter. What you are saying is a gross distortion of the truth!'

Masahira and the others accepted the criticism and withdrew. On another occasion, while Masakado was relaxing, his page, Iwa no Kazutsune,[205] ventured to address him as follows:

'If a lord has a retainer who will remonstrate with him, then he will never fall into unrighteousness.[206] If you do not take Masahira's advice, the nation will be placed in great peril. There is a saying that goes, "To disobey Heaven brings disaster, and to oppose a ruler brings rebuke."[207] I pray that you will place your faith in the remonstrances of Jīvaka and make imperial decisions that take all issues into account.'[208]

To this the New Emperor replied:

'A man's abilities can either lead him to err or bring him happiness, depending on the person. Once he has spoken, even a team

[203] Kao-tsu, which means High Progenitor, is the posthumous title of Liu Pang, 247–195 B.C., the founder of the Han dynasty.

[204] The Ashigara Barrier (*Ashigara no seki*) was a checkpoint on the eastern side of Ashigara Pass on the border between Sagami and Suruga provinces. The Usui Barrier (*Usui no seki*), also a checkpoint, was set up at Usui Pass on the border between Kōzuke and Shinano. By fortifying these barriers, Masakado hoped to block the entry of counter-insurgency forces from the capital coming along the Tōsandō road over Usui Pass and along the Tōkaidō road over Ashigara Pass into the Bandō region.

[205] Biography unknown.

[206] This sentence may have been inspired by the following passage in *Ch'en-kuei*, 1, p. 20b: 'In ancient times, if an emperor [literally, a ruler possessing a force of ten thousand chariots] had seven ministers who would remonstrate with him, he would not make blunders.' *Hsiao ching* and *Han shu* have similar passages. Kajihara (7), II, p. 164.

[207] The source of this saying is unknown.

[208] Kazutsune is identifying Masakado's younger brother and would-be advisor, Masahira, with the pious Indian physician, Jīvaka (J. Giba). Jīvaka remonstrated with his younger brother, Prince Ajātaśatru, urging him to give up his wicked ways and seek Buddhist salvation. See p. 80, n. 38, above.

of four horses cannot overtake his words.[209] What can possibly be accomplished by your speaking out now? Your attempt to change what has already been decided shows how thoughtless you really are!'

Much taken aback by this rebuke, Kazutsune bit his tongue and silently withdrew to the seclusion of his quarters. It was as in olden days when the Ch'in emperor burned the books and buried the scholars alive.[210] Thus, hardly anyone dared to remonstrate with Masakado.

Now Prince Okiyo, the provisional governor of Musashi, was Masakado's chief minister at the time. Following the prince's instructions, Harumochi announced the appointments for the various provincial posts, declaring that they had been authorized in the New Emperor's decree.[211] Masakado's younger brother, Taira no Ason no Masayori,[212] was appointed governor of Shimotsuke, and Taji no Tsuneakira,[213] manager of the imperial pastures of Ikuwa, was made governor of Kōzuke. The post of vice-governor of Hitachi went to Fujiwara no Harumochi,[214] and Prince Okiyo, the pro-

[209] The locus classicus of this well-known saying is found in Chapter 12 of *Lun yü*, 6, p. 15ab: 'Tsze-kung said, "Alas, your words, sir, show you to be a superior man, but four horses cannot overtake the tongue." ' Legge (2), p. 255. The saying is found with minor variations in other texts, including *Ch'en-kuei*, 2, p. 6a. The wording of this latter version is closest to that of *Shōmonki*, and it seems probable that this was the immediate source consulted by the author.

[210] Starting in 213 B.C., Ch'in-shih Huang-ti, r. 247–209 B.C., the self-styled 'First Emperor' of the Ch'in dynasty, carried out a ruthless persecution against the scholars whose philosophies and writings were considered subversive.

[211] The text previously stated that both Okiyo and Harumochi were Masakado's chief ministers (*saijin*) and supposedly shared responsibilities delegated by Masakado. Here, however, Okiyo alone is named as *saijin* and seems to be in a position superior to Harumochi. I have added the words 'following the prince's instructions', as in Kajihara (7), II, p. 172, to clarify the apparent meaning of the text.

[212] Masakado's immediate junior. *Chiba Keizu* has the notation 'Governor of Shimōsa' below his name; *Sōma Keizu* has 'Governor of Shimotsuke', the post to which he was supposedly appointed by Masakado. *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū*, 6 *shū*, pt. 1, pp. 157 & 224.

[213] The text states that Tsuneakira was appointed governor of Kōzuke, but if the *shinnō ninkoku* system of administration was preserved by Masakado, the highest post for him in the provincial government there would have been that of vice-governor.

[214] The fact that Harumochi was appointed vice-governor, and not governor, of Hitachi seems to indicate that Masakado intended to preserve the *shinnō ninkoku* system in that province. The same may be said for Kazusa, where Okiyo was appointed vice-governor by Masakado.

visional governor of Musashi, was named vice-governor of Kazusa. Bun'ya no Yoshitachi was appointed governor of Awa, and the post of governor of Sagami was given to Taira no Masabumi.[215] Taira no Masatake became governor of Izu, and Taira no Masatame was made governor of Shimōsa.[216]

While the provincial governors were being appointed, the construction of an imperial palace was being discussed. The following document was drafted:

> The imperial palace shall be constructed to the south of Masakado's residence in Shimōsa province.[217] Further, Ukihashi shall be called Yamazaki after the Yamazaki area of the capital,[218] and Ōi Ford in Sōma district shall be named Ōtsu after the Ōtsu of the capital.[219]

[215] The sixth of eight sons of Yoshimasa and, at one time, governor of Sagami, according to *Sompi Bummyaku*. It is not known whether or not he was already holding public office in Sagami when Masakado appointed him governor of that province.

[216] Taira no Masatake was the seventh of Yoshimasa's sons, his brother Masatame the eighth, according to *Sompi Bummyaku*. *Sōma Keizu* identifies Masatake as the governor of Izu, Masatame as the governor of Shimōsa. When they first took up these posts is not known.

According to *Shishuki*, for Tengyō 3(940).4.12, Masakado's younger brother, Masatane, plotted an uprising with Ban no Arimune, who was then provisional vice-governor of Mutsu. Kajihara (7), II, p. 175. Masatane and Masatame were most likely the same person. It seems odd that Izu—but not Musashi—is listed among the provinces to which Masakado made appointments. Izu was not a Bandō province; Musashi was.

[217] Since the construction of a palace was never realized—even the plans for construction may never have existed—the location of the proposed site 'to the south of Masakado's residence in Shimōsa' is unknown.

[218] The place-name Ukihashi has not been identified. Yamazaki was located in the southern part of Otokuni district in Yamashiro province to the southwest of the capital. Situated at the confluence of three rivers, Yamazaki was an important fishing and transport center and market place, and was considered the southern doorway to the capital, Heian-kyō. Ukihashi, which means 'floating bridge', may have been similarly situated on a river somewhere along the southwestern border of the site of Masakado's proposed capital.

[219] The village of Ōi Ford (Ōi no tsu) in Sōma district may be the same place as the village of Ōi, also in Sōma, which is entered in *Wamyō Ruiju Shō*, 6, p. 30a. For the various theories concerning the location of Ōi, see Kajihara (7), II, pp. 180–81.

Kyō no Ōtsu to which Ōi is said to correspond refers to the town of Ōtsu, situated on the western shore of Lake Biwa. Ōtsu was considered the eastern doorway to the capital; presumably Ōi no tsu was similarly situated on a lake or river on the eastern border of the site of Masakado's capital.

Then the ministers of the left and right,[220] the counselors,[221] the consultants,[222] various civil and military officials,[223] the six controllers,[224] and the eight recorders[225] were all appointed. In addition, it was decided how large the seals of the Council of State and the emperor should be, and that the Clerical and Regular scripts should be used therein.[226] The only matter left unresolved was the appointment of a master of calendars.[227]

Like startled fish, like birds in flight, top officials in the region scurried off to the capital when they heard from afar the news of these developments.[228] Thereupon the New Emperor made a circuit inspection of his domain, going as far as Musashi and Sagami pro-

[220] *Sadaijin* and *udaijin*. The *sadaijin* administered the Council of State, reviewed the judgments of the Board of Censors (*danjōdai*), and superintended the activities of the Imperial Palace. The *udaijin* served as the *sadaijin*'s deputy and on occasion took over his duties.

[221] *Nōgon*, of which there were three, advised the emperor, transmitted imperial decrees, approved documents submitted to the emperor, and transacted minor secretarial business.

[222] *Sangi*, a primary imperial advisory board of eight men.

[223] The text has *bumbu hyakkan*, the comprehensive designation for all civil and military posts in the central bureaucracy.

[224] *Rokuben*. Three were appointed to the Left Controllers' Office (*sabenkan*) and three to the Right Controllers' Office (*ubenkan*). Each of the Controllers' Offices supervised the work of four ministries in the central bureaucracy.

[225] *Hachishi*. Four were assigned to the Left Controllers' Office and four to the Right Controllers' Office. They dealt with much of the Council of State's paperwork and handled records of provincial governments and lesser offices (*tsukasa*).

[226] The Clerical Script, *kobun*, literally 'the ancient [character] form', also known as *reisho* (Ch. *li shu*), is an old form of square (as opposed to cursive) character script that came into its own for use in government records and on monuments in the Later Han dynasty. *Shōji*, translated here as 'Regular [Character] Script', appears to be synonymous with the term *kaisho* (Ch. *k'ai shu*), a standard square-character form descended from the *kobun* style, which it resembles in its angularity.

[227] *Koyomi no hakase*, an official in the Bureau of Divination (*onmyō-ryō*). His duties included making up the annual calendar, training students in the science of calendar-making, and forecasting solar eclipses.

[228] 'From afar' (*haruka ni*) follows *Yō Shukei Kyūzō-bon*. By this time Masakado had succeeded in ousting the top officials of Hitachi, Shimotsuke, and Kōzuke, but he had not yet annexed the other Bandō provinces. It was doubtless the governors or vice-governors of these remaining provinces who fled at this time. *Teishin-kō Kishō*, for Tengyō 3(940).1.25, records that new appointments were made to replace those officials who had fled their provinces of assignment. DNS, I. 7, p. 601. Clearly the court did not recognize the appointees whom Masakado had assigned to these provinces the month before.

vinces.[229] Upon seizing the seals and keys of government in each province visited, he ordered the remaining officials to continue discharging their duties as usual. Masakado next issued a proclamation to the Council of State, announcing that he would take over the imperial throne, and then he returned to Shimōsa from Sagami.[230]

Officials in the capital were greatly shocked by these events and the court was thrown into a panic. The legitimate sovereign[231] entreated the Buddha for ten days' grace, during which time eminent monks from the seven great temples in Nara were called upon to say prayers, and offerings were made to the eight great Shinto gods.[232] An imperial edict was proclaimed as follows:[233]

> Humbly I ascended the imperial throne, believing it my good fortune to succeed to the 'Great Undertaking'. Now I have heard that Masakado is trying to usurp the throne by the most treacherous means. Yesterday it was reported that he is determined to attack the capital any day. Make offerings to the gods at once in order that this evil be checked, and invoke the power of Buddha without delay so that the danger from the rebels be eliminated.

Thereupon the emperor left his throne and placed the palms of his hands above his head in an attitude of prayer.[234] Other government officials performed ritual ablutions and offered an endless succession of prayers at the temples. In addition, high priests in mountain temples conducted esoteric rituals to exorcise the evil spirits, while clergy at a number of shrines prayed to their spirit

[229] The provinces toured by Masakado en route to Musashi and Sagami were probably Shimōsa, Kazusa, Izu, and Awa. The inclusion here of Musashi in the list of provinces toured is curious insofar as it is omitted from the earlier list of provinces to which appointments were made by Masakado. The inclusion of Musashi in Masakado's Bandō realm would bring the total number of annexed provinces to nine.

[230] There is no document to corroborate that Masakado formally announced his ascension to the throne as *Shōmonki* states.

[231] *Moto no tennō*, a reference to Emperor Suzaku.

[232] The seven great temples of Nara are listed in *Iroha Jirui Shō*, III, 9, p. 128a: Tōdaiji, Kōfukuji, Saidaiji, Daianji, Yakushiji, Genkōji, and Hōryūji. The eight great Shinto gods (*hachi daimyōjin*) have not been identified.

[233] There are no records to corroborate that the emperor proclaimed an edict during the First Month of Tengyō 3 (940), nor is there historical evidence to confirm that he 'entreated the Buddha for ten days' grace,' as the preceding sentence states.

[234] The explanatory phrase, 'in an attitude of prayer', has been added.

mediums to bring sudden death to the forces of evil.[235] Over the period of a week, more than seven *koku* of poppy seeds were burned in holy invocation fires[236] and vast quantities of offerings in the five colors were placed upon the altar.[237] The names of the evil men were burned in altar fires, and effigies of the rebels were hung under buckthorn and maple trees.[238]

The five great bodhisattvas sent out their attendants to the eastern provinces, while the eight deities shot their divine arrows at the enemy.[239] Frowning with displeasure, the heavenly deities condemned the rebel Masakado for aspiring to such high station, and the earthly deities harshly rebuked the evil king, bitterly resenting his untoward ambition. The New Emperor did not have a long-range plan for achieving his goal and showed the narrow-mindedness of a frog at the bottom of a well.

Masakado returned to his headquarters from Sagami, but before his horse had even had time to rest its legs, he set out once more for Hitachi in the middle of the First Month of Tengyō 3. He led an army of five thousand soldiers and was determined to conquer his remaining enemies. Some Fujiwara men of the Naka and Kuji districts came out to meet him on the border and welcomed him with a feast of all the finest foods.[240] The New Emperor said to

[235] 'Spirit mediums', *shikijin*, were employed by the exorcist to bring down an evil spirit or curse upon a person or to dispel such a malevolent spirit when it was in possession of a person.

[236] Seven *koku* is equivalent to about 35 U.S. bushels. In esoteric Buddhist rituals, poppy seeds were burned in the holy altar fires in the belief that the pungent odor of the burning seeds would drive away evil spirits.

[237] According to the Chinese five agents, or *wu-hsiang*, philosophy, the five colors (*goshiki*) comprise the primary colors of the spectrum: blue, yellow, red, white, and black. In Buddhism, these five colors have been interpreted in various ways to represent certain attributes or ideas: for example, white represents faith; red, endeavor; yellow, memory, etc. Soothill & Hodous, p. 125, and Takeuchi, p. 499.

[238] The religious significance, if any, of these trees has not been determined.

[239] According to *Ninnō Hannyaharamitsukyō*, the five great bodhisattvas, or *godai rikison*, are Kongōku, Ryūōku, Muijūrikku, Raidenku, and Muryōrikku, deities sent to earth to protect a future propagator of the dharma. *Daizōkyō*, VIII, p. 833.1. The eight deities (*hachi daisonkan*) may be a reference to the *hachi shōjin*, 'the eight divine generals', who guard the lucky and unlucky directions in the ying-yang conception of directional taboos.

[240] Naka and Kuji were neighboring districts in the northern part of Hitachi where the Fujiwara are thought to have been influential. The border where the meeting is said to have taken place was probably the one between Ibaraki and Naka districts in Hitachi.

them, 'Tell me the whereabouts of Secretary Sadamori, Tamenori, and the others.' The Fujiwara men replied, 'We have heard that they have been drifting to and fro like clouds, never staying in any fixed place.'

Ten days elapsed during which Masakado continued his search for Sadamori and the others. Meanwhile, the wives of Secretary Sadamori and Minamoto no Tasuku were apprehended, albeit with some difficulty, near Hiruma Inlet in Yoshida district.[241] They were pursued and captured by some men under captains Taji no Tsuneakira and Sakanoue no Katsutaka. When Masakado received word of this, he issued an imperial order to prevent the women from suffering abuse, but by that time they had already been assaulted by some low-ranking soldiers.

Sadamori's wife was particularly unfortunate, for she was stripped naked and could do nothing to defend herself. Tears streamed down her face, streaking her white makeup, while indignation burned in her breast. She was now having to suffer the humiliation that others within and without the province had borne in the past. She had run afoul of Sadamori's old enemies, and having been soundly defeated by him in the past, they were now getting their revenge. But how is it possible to place the blame for our troubles on any one person or feel bitterness toward Heaven? The simple fact of the matter is that ignominy suffered by a person in this life is caused by the actions of a number of people.[242]

Some of the officers who had witnessed the incident told the New Emperor:

'Sadamori's wife is not of uncomely countenance, nor has she done anything wrong. We pray that you will graciously intervene on her behalf so that she may be sent back home at once.'

The New Emperor replied:

'There is legal precedent for returning female vagrants to their domicile.[243] Moreover, the emperors of old constantly maintained

[241] Not an official district name but rather the popular designation for the eastern part of Naka district. Hiruma Inlet (Hiruma no e) was located at Yoshida, forming a boundary between the districts of Naka and Shikashima. Hiruma Inlet is identified with modern Hiruma in Higashi Ibaraki district in Ibaraki prefecture.

[242] As applied to Sadamori's wife, this could perhaps be taken to mean that the humiliation incurred was a consequence of her husband's troublesome associations with other men.

[243] There does not seem to have been a law that applied specifically to women. An amendment to *ritsuryō* law promulgated on Tempyō 8(736).2.15, states that

the practice of showing kindness to the lonely and destitute.'[244]

Masakado then presented Sadamori's wife with a full set of clothing and recited the following impromptu poem so that he might discover where her feelings lay:

Distant though I am from you,
The courier wind comes calling
And I am moved to ask:
Where lies the cherry flower
That has fallen from its branch?[245]

Grateful to have received such merciful attention, Sadamori's wife composed this poem in reply:

Distant though I am from you,
The fragrance of your flower
Wafts down upon me,
So I do not think myself
A wretched lonely soul.

Then Tasuku's wife, shamed by the misfortune that she had suffered, had someone relay to Masakado the following poem that she had written:[246]

Like cherry flowers
Lying scattered on the ground,
My life is now in vain—
This heart of mine benumbed
By the winds of bitter misfortune.

inquiry should be made about a vagrant's domicile and that he should be sent home if he shows contrition. This amendment represented a more lenient policy toward vagrants, for earlier legislation had prescribed caning, the number of strokes depending on the length of the period of vagrancy. Takeuchi, p. 500.

[244] Masakado's alleged remarks concerning the charity of 'emperors of old' are inspired by a passage in *Meng tzu*, 2, p. 9a, that states that King Wen 'in the institution of his government with its benevolent action, made [the most destitute and lonely of people] the objects of his regard.' Legge (3), p. 162.

[245] 'Distant though I am from you', *yoso ni te mo*, can also be taken to mean 'though we are not related' or 'though we are not romantically involved.' The phrase is used again in the poem that follows. *Kaze no tayori*, 'the courier wind', connotes rumors out of the blue, since wind is conventionally regarded as the medium by which rumors travel.

[246] In all likelihood, Tasuku's wife, now a widow, was also assaulted by Masakodo's men. Sadamori's wife and Tasuku's wife were sisters-in-law since the former was Tasuku's sister. This may explain why the two women were together at the time.

While poetry was being pleasantly exchanged in this manner, a mellow, cheerful mood came to prevail among Masakado's men and their rebellious spirit temporarily subsided.

Many days passed, but since there was still no news of the enemy's whereabouts, Masakado decided to send home the soldiers recruited from the various provinces in the Bandō. Less than one thousand soldiers now remained with him.

When Sadamori heard about these developments, he and Provincial Constable[247] Fujiwara no Hidesato[248] mobilized an army of more than four thousand men, hoping to engage Masakado in battle at once. The New Emperor was greatly astonished when he learned of their intentions and, on the 1st day of the Second Month, he led his troops across the border into enemy territory in Shimotsuke.

At the time, Masakado's vanguard did not yet know of the enemy's whereabouts, but the soldiers led by captains Tsuneakira and Katsutaka in the rearguard of Assistant Commander Harumochi's forces managed to find out where they were located. In order to verify this information, the men climbed a high hill to gain a distant view to the north. Indeed, there were the enemy and they seemed to number more than four thousand soldiers.

Now Tsuneakira had gained a reputation as a warrior capable of taking on a thousand soldiers, and he could not let this opportunity slip by. Without first telling Masakado his plans, he and his men advanced and attacked Provincial Constable Hidesato's band. But Hidesato employed a time-honored battle strategy by which he was able to defeat Harumochi's men according to plan; his triple-army tactic routed the assistant commander and his soldiers, and they fled in all directions.[249] The men who knew their way sped off like arrows released from bow strings, while those unfamiliar

[247] *Ōryōshi*, a law-enforcement post created in 878 to deal with the *ezo* revolts in Dewa province. Although a temporary appointment at first, it later tended to become a permanent one following the Masakado and Sumitomo rebellions of 940 and 941. The *ōryōshi*'s duties involved the arrest of malefactors and the settling of regional disturbances. *Ōryōshi* were in most cases assigned jurisdiction over a single province.

[248] The eldest son of Murao and a fifth-generation descendant of Fusasaki, d. 737, who founded the Hokke branch of the Fujiwara. The year of Hidesato's appointment to the *ōryōshi* post is not known. His appearance in the text is sudden, and no explanation of his previous relations with the other principals is provided. Hidesato was banished in 916 together with eighteen other members of the same family for an unspecified offense, but he later won honor for his part in suppressing the Masakado Uprising.

with the terrain ran around in a tearing haste like whirling wheels. Few escaped with their lives, and by the end many indeed had perished in the fighting.

Sadamori and Hidesato set out on the enemy's trail, arriving in Kawaguchi around mid-afternoon on the same day. Masakado was already there to meet them; shouting a battle cry, he brandished his sword and personally led his men into combat.

Sadamori looked heavenward and exclaimed:

'The rebels who are out to serve their own private interests are like lightning bolts above the clouds, while our soldiers who serve the public cause are as spineless as worms in the pit of a latrine. But whereas the rebels do not have the law on their side, we have Heaven on ours! Our three thousand men will never turn their backs on the enemy!'

Later in the afternoon[250] the sun began to set, but all the soldiers, having plucked up courage rivaling that of Li Ling, were determined to fight to the bitter end. Sadamori's men drew their mulberry bows with ease, and their rubus arrows hit right on target.[251] The government army was stronger than usual, whereas the rebel forces were weaker than before.

'New Emperor' though he was, Masakado turned his horse around, and with his shield in front of him, retreated from battle. It was a case of yesterday's cocks being today's chickens. The Hitachi army then made camp, laughing scornfully at their enemy, while the Shimōsa soldiers left the area, filled with shame and anger.[252]

[249] 'Triple-army tactic', or *sampei no te*, refers to the practice of dividing an army into three parts. Hidesato, Sadamori, and Tamenori probably each commanded a division consisting of more than a thousand men.

[250] Literally, 'the hours of the Sheep and Monkey', the period between one and five in the afternoon. Since the sun was beginning to set, the time was probably closer to five, if not still later. The traditional time of dusk was the hour of the Dog, the period between seven and nine in the evening.

[251] A secondary commentary on the term 'rubus arrows' in *Li chi* states, 'Rubus is a plant for stopping disorder.' *Dai Kan-wa Jiten*, VI, p. 335. 1, #33. This may help to explain why Sadamori's men are said to have used rubus arrows to fight Masakado.

[252] The 'Hitachi army' probably refers to the soldiers recruited from Hitachi who were under the command of Tamenori and Sadamori, both of whom lived in that province. The Shimōsa soldiers under Masakado's command constituted his entire force at the time and numbered less than a thousand. It will be recalled that Masakado sent home thousands of soldiers recruited from various provinces in the Bandō just before the battle at Kawaguchi, and retained only his Shimōsa contingent.

Afterward Sadamori and Hidesato conferred together. Sadamori spoke as follows:

'Each of us has but one short life, and Masakado cannot live forever. Yet he forces his way on people high-handedly, making himself the bane of our existence. Outside his own province, he uses his might to commit acts of savage evil from dawn to dusk; when in his own province, he strives greedily for wealth and power throughout the countryside. He is even more harmful than the huge termites of the Bandō and the poisonous snakes of the wilds.

'Long ago, I heard the story of how the snake-deity was killed and the Land of the Nine Divisions was thereby pacified,[253] and also how the big whale was slain and the Four Seas were thereby purged.[254] [According to *Han shu*, 'snake-deity' is an allusion to a person named Ch'ih Yu.[255] In *Tso chuan*, Ch'u Tzu says that 'big whale' is a term for a giant fish and is used figuratively for immoral men who swallow up small kingdoms.][256] If we do not kill this rebel and put an end to the turmoil he has caused, what began as a private struggle will become a matter of public concern, and the august virtue of his Imperial Majesty may suffer.

'*Shang shu* states, "Although the empire may be at peace, one must always be prepared to go to war; the soldiers in armor may

[253] 'The Nine Divisions' (*kyūya*) refers to the Chinese empire which, according to *Chou li*, was divided into nine provinces in ancient times. Here Sadamori is alluding to an anecdote found in *Shih chi*, 8, p. 5ab. Briefly, Kao-tsu once killed a giant snake, later discovered to be the son of the God of White, symbol of the Ch'in. The death of the snake was believed to foretoken Kao-tsu's eventual triumph over the Ch'in in his campaign to overthrow the dynasty.

[254] The Four Seas, that is, the seas of the four quarters of the earth, were thought by the Chinese to delimit their vast empire. The expression became synonymous with the Chinese realm and the entire world, the greater part of which China was believed to occupy. This sentence was inspired by a passage in the preface of *Ti fan*, pp. 2a–3a, some phrases being taken almost verbatim by the author.

[255] This note is in error, for *Han shu* makes no mention of Ch'ih Yu in connection with the legend of Kao-tsu and the snake. Ch'ih Yu was in fact a legendary rebel who tried to overthrow Huang Ti. See p. 131, n. 267, below.

[256] 'Big whale', or *chōgei* 長鯨, is wrongly ascribed to *Tso chuan*, for it is taken from the commentary on that text in *Ch'un-ch'iu ching chuan chi-chieh*, 11, p. 82: '*Ching ni* 鯨鯢, "huge whale", is the name of a giant fish and is used as a figure of speech for immoral men who swallow up smaller countries [into their own realms].'

The above is reproduced almost verbatim in *Shōmonki*, the main point of difference being that *Shōmonki* erroneously adds the words *Sōshi ga iwaku* 楚子曰, 'Ch'u Tzu says . . . ', to introduce the note. Only the lines of text immediately preceding the note are the direct speech of Ch'u Tzu.

be strong, but they must nevertheless continue to train."[257] Although we have won this time, we must think of future battles. Furthermore, we recall that when King Wu fell ill, the Duke of Chou wanted to die in his place.[258] I, Sadamori, am ready to destroy the enemy and lay down my life for this public cause.'

Thereupon Sadamori gathered together the local people and, persuading them with enticing words, mobilized an army that was twice the size of his previous one. Then, on the 13th day of the Second Month, he arrived with his soldiers at the border of Shimōsa province, the territory of the mighty rebels.

In order to lure his battle-weary adversaries into his home territory, the New Emperor led his soldiers to Lake Hiroe in Sashima district, where they hid in wait for Sadamori. Meanwhile, Sadamori went from place to place making various arrangements and laying plans. First he set fire to the splendid residence of the New Emperor and then went on to burn down the houses of his supporters. The smoke rose high and filled the heavens, as the houses, abandoned by their former owners, burned to the ground. The few monks and laymen who survived the conflagration left their homes and fled into the mountains; some gentlemen and ladies who had managed to live through the fire wandered the streets in a daze, not knowing what to do. But the people were not bitter over the destruction that the province of Shimōsa had suffered;[259] they only lamented the lawlessness that they had experienced at Masakado's hands.

Sadamori set out in pursuit of his enemy but was unable to find him on that day. On the following morning,[260] Masakado put on his helmet and armor and tried to think where he could find a secluded refuge. He harbored rebellious and evil thoughts, and had his mind set on committing outrages like those of Wei Fang. [Wei Fang was a man from Ching-fu. By nature, he was given to crafty, crooked ways; when his pursuers came to capture him, he skillfully eluded them.][261] But Masakado's regular army of eight thousand men had

[257] This quotation, attributed here to *Shang shu*, does not appear in that work as it has come down to us.

[258] For the story of how Chou Kung, the loyal and self-sacrificing Duke of Chou, prayed that he might be permitted to die in place of his ailing brother, King Wu, r. 1122–1115 B.C., see Legge (4), pp. 351–56.

[259] The text actually has Hitachi here, but Shimōsa is correct. Sadamori apparently did extensive damage in Toyota district in Shimōsa by setting fires.

[260] Tengyō 3(940).2.14.

[261] Biography unknown. Ching-fu, Wei Fang's reputed place of origin, has been tentatively identified with Chiang-ling in Hupei province. Hayashi (3), p. 126.

failed to assemble on that day and he found himself in command of a mere four hundred or so. While waiting for the other soldiers to arrive, they assembled in battle formation at the foot of Mt Kita[262] in Sashima district and kept a sharp lookout for the enemy.

Meanwhile, Sadamori and Hidesato were working on a defense strategy as clever as those designed by Tzu Fan[263] and were practicing swordsmanship equal to that of Li Lao himself.[264] [Po Chü-i writes that both Tzu Fan and Yang Yu were natives of Fei-shun-tai and lived during the Han dynasty. When he had just turned forty, Tzu Fan could throw a halberd a distance of fifteen *li*. On becoming seventy, Yang Yu could cover a distance of three thousand *li*, brandishing his sword all the way. This is why these two men are mentioned here.][265]

In mid-afternoon on the 14th, the two sides engaged in combat. The New Emperor had the wind in his favor, while Sadamori, Hidesato, and the others were in an unfavorable position downwind. A fierce wind whistled through the trees, making the earth's hollows resound and sending clods of dirt flying through the air. The New Emperor's shield was blown forward by wind from the south, throwing him off balance, while Sadamori's shield was forced back into his face.[266] Because of this difficulty, both sides put aside their shields and did battle without them.

In the midst of the fighting, Sadamori's center unit suddenly changed its position of attack. The New Emperor's men responded by launching a counterattack on horseback; pursuing and scattering the enemy, they took the lives of more than eighty men. But some 2,900 supporters allied with Sadamori, Hidesato, and Tamenori

[262] Kitayama. *Fusō Ryakki* has Shimahiro-yama. DNS, I. 7, p. 624. The exact location is not known. Some scholars place it in the area of Kokuō Jinja to the north of Iwai-shi. For a summary of the various theories, see Kajihara (7), II, pp. 277–78, and Stramigioli (1), p. 290.

[263] Here the author probably had in mind an illustrious warrior named Kung Tzu-ts'e (courtesy name, Tzu Fan) who served under Chuang Wang as minister of war during the Warring States period and achieved merit for defeating the armies of Chin in the Battle of Pi. If so, the note that follows stating that he lived during the Han dynasty is in error.

[264] Identity uncertain. The note that follows in the text appears to identify him as Yang Yu, probably an error for Yang Yu-chi. See p. 93, n. 102, above. There is no evidence that Yang was ever known by the name Li Lao. Yang Yu-chi lived during the Warring States period, not the Han as the note states.

[265] The legendary information contained in this annotation has not been found in the extant writings of Po Chü-i. *Fei-shun-tai* has not been identified.

[266] Literally, 'The south side of the New Emperor's shield was swept forward and he was forced off balance, while the north side of Sadamori's shield covered his face.'

managed to escape from Masakado's men who had set out in hot pursuit. Only three hundred or more of Sadamori's finest soldiers now remained at the scene of battle, but even they were at a loss what to do, running around in a state of bewilderment.

Just at that moment the wind suddenly changed direction, giving Sadamori's troops the advantage. As the New Emperor returned to join his main force, he found himself downwind from the enemy. Sadamori, Hidesato, and the others fought bitterly with all the strength they could muster. The New Emperor put on his helmet and armor, galloped his charger off to the front, and joined in the fighting himself. But the punishment of Heaven was clearly visited upon him when his horse failed to fly like the wind and he himself lost the skill of Li Lao. Struck by a stray arrow from one of the gods, Masakado perished all alone like Ch'ih Yu after fighting his last battle on the 'fields of Cho-lu'.[267] Never in this world had a general actually joined in battle and died at the front like Masakado.

Who could have foreseen that a small transgression left unrectified would bring about a situation so disastrous, or that Masakado would try to extend his private influence in order to usurp official authority?[268] Thus, a man who was like Chu Yün was charged with the task of 'cutting off the head of the big whale.' [According to *Han shu*, Chu Yün was an evil man. Once long ago he requested the sword of the master of imperial implements and beheaded a man with it.][269]

Thereupon, on the 25th day of the Fourth Month of that year, Masakado's head was sent to the capital along with a certificate

[267] Ch'ih Yu was a legendary rebel who tried to overthrow Huang Ti, but was defeated in the battle at Cho-lu, in what is now Hopei province. Sadamori is credited with killing Masakado in one historical record, while Hidesato is accorded the honor in another. A third source diplomatically credits both men. DNS, I. 7, pp. 624 & 753.

[268] 'Small transgression' probably refers to Masakado's unpremeditated takeover of Hitachi.

[269] *Han shu* makes no such reference to Chu Yün (courtesy name, Yu) as an 'evil man'. But it relates that 'in his youth he was friendly with lawless knights' and that he was later sent to prison for allegedly inciting murder. He eventually reformed in middle age and thenceforth led a virtuous life. Watson, pp. 112 & 115–16.

Chu Yün won honor as a patriot for remonstrating with Emperor Ch'eng, r. 32–07 B.C., about his incompetent, self-serving tutor, Chang Yü. According to *Han shu*, 67, pp. 6b–7a, Chu Yün pleaded with the emperor to be allowed to borrow a sword and kill Chang Yü. Watson, p. 116. 'Big whale' is discussed on p. 128, n. 256, above.

issued by the Shimotsuke provincial government.[270] The vice-governor of Hitachi, Fujiwara no Korechika no Ason, together with the official supervising the transition to the new administration, had the good fortune of being able to return to the government offices in Hitachi, the province to which they had been assigned, on the 15th day of the Second Month. They were as lucky as pheasants that survive the hawk's attack in the fields, or fish that are spared on the chopping block and thrown back into the sea. Previously Korechika had harbored the bitterness of a wretched old man, but on this day he incurred a fresh debt of gratitude toward Sadamori.

All in all, the fact that Masakado lost his honor and his life was really due to the schemes of the provisional governor of Musashi, Prince Okiyo, and the vice-governor of Hitachi, Fujiwara no Harumochi. How sad to think of Masakado's pathetic fall from grace and lamentable end! He was like fine ripened grain that suddenly withers just as it is nearing maturity, or the full moon that is prematurely dimmed by obscuring clouds just when it shines most brightly. [It was spring at the time; thus, the expression 'ripened grain' is used. The expression about the full moon being hidden by clouds is employed because Masakado died on the 14th day of the Second Month.]

In *Tso chuan* we find the following words: 'A man who is greedy for power and turns his back on the state is like the tiger that, relying only upon its fierceness, tramples its enemy's sword.'[271] Another source states, 'A small man has difficulty putting to use whatever talents he may possess; an evil man who is greedy for power has difficulty holding on to it.'[272] Perhaps the words, 'If a man takes no thought about what is distant, he will soon find sorrow near at hand,' would best describe this situation.[273]

Masakado had built up a splendid record of service in the capital bureaucracy, and his reputation for loyalty and trustworthiness would have resounded through history. But he later made unruliness and violence his way of life, occupying himself year in and year out with the business of making war. He had no regard whatever for

[270] *Nihon Kiryaku* confirms that on Tengyō 3(940).4.25, Hidesato dispatched a messenger from Shimotsuke to bring Masakado's head to the capital. The fact that the certificate was issued from Shimotsuke, Hidesato's place of residence, suggests that Hidesato claimed responsibility for killing Masakado. DNS, I. 7, p. 753.

[271] This line does not appear in *Tso chuan* as that work has come down to us.

[272] This source has not been identified.

[273] The source of this saying is Chapter 15 of *Lun yü*, 8, p. 4b. The translation is based on Legge (2), p. 298.

men of learning and was interested solely in the martial arts. So it was that he fought against his own relations, facing off shield to shield. Enjoying doing evil, he became guilty of crimes; the burden of his accumulated sins caught up with him, and voices of harsh censure were heard throughout the eight eastern provinces. He finally perished on the 'battlefield of Pan-ch'üan', leaving the name of rebel to posterity. [According to *Han shu*, Pan-ch'üan was the place where Kao-tsu did battle long ago.][274]

Back on the 11th day of the First Month, a warrant for the arrest of the rebel leader's brothers and other followers had been sent to the provinces in the Tōkaidō and Tōsandō circuits. The document stated that anyone who could be recruited to kill the rebel leader would be rewarded with the rank of Wearer of the Red or Purple Robe, and that whoever could kill his second-in-command stood to receive an official post and a rank commensurate with his merits and achievement.[275]

Thereupon Fujiwara no Ason no Tadabun,[276] imperial envoy and commander-in-chief of the east subjugation (he also held posts as consultant, director of the Palace Repairs Office, and commander of the Right Gate Guards), and Fujiwara no Ason no Tadanobu,[277] assistant commander of the east subjugation and senior assistant minister of the Justice Ministry, were dispatched to the eight provinces of the east. While they were en route, the rebel leader Masakado's younger brother, Masayori, and Fujiwara no Harumochi and the others fled to Sagami province, where they were killed.

[274] This note is in error. Pan-ch'üan was the site where the legendary emperors Yen Ti and Huang Ti fought three times in the third millennium B.C.

[275] This indirect quotation of the contents of the warrant is largely based on the original text of this document as preserved in *Honchō Seiki* for Tengyō 3(940). 1.11. DNS, I. 7, p. 581. The 'second-in-command' probably refers to either Okiyo or Harumochi, Masakado's ministers.

[276] 873–947, son of Kazuyoshi and a fifth-generation descendant of Umakai, d. 737, who established the Shikike branch of the Fujiwara. *Shōmonki* identifies Tadabun as the *sadai-shōgun*, this title being an apparent error for *seitō-daishōgun*, commander-in-chief of the east subjugation. He was appointed to this post on Tengyō 3(940).1.19. That this appointment was a temporary one is reflected in the title 'imperial envoy', which also appears in the text. Tadabun did not set forth on his eastern expedition until Tengyō 3.2.8, which means that he was still en route to the east when Masakado was killed. DNS, I. 7, pp. 591 & 616.

[277] 藤原朝臣忠舒. *Sompi Bummyaku* writes Tadanobu 忠舘. *Kokushi Taikei*, LIX, p. 526. The younger brother of Tadabun, Tadanobu was one of five men appointed *fuku-shōgun*, or assistant commander, for the eastern campaign against Masakado. DNS, I. 7, p. 616.

Soon thereafter, Prince Okiyo took refuge in Kazusa, where he was put to death.[278] Sakanoue no Katsutaka, Fujiwara no Haruaki, and the others were all killed in Hitachi.

Following this, Fujiwara no Tadanobu, the regional commander of the Tōkaidō forces and senior assistant minister in the Justice Ministry, appointed Taira no Kimitsura, then the provisional junior secretary of Shimōsa, to the post of provincial constable.[279] They went into Shimōsa together on the 8th day of the Fourth Month, and promptly hunted down and attacked the remaining rebels there. Seven or eight of these rebels were younger brothers of the former leader, Masakado. Some of them received the tonsure and fled deep into the mountains, while others abandoned their wives and children and roamed over hill and dale. Other surviving relatives of Masakado fled the province, fearing for their lives.

The arrest warrant, dated the 11th day of the First Month, was again circulated to provinces far and wide,[280] and gradually people made their way to the palace authorities to take advantage of an offer of a pardon that had been made by the imperial envoy on the 16th day of the Second Month.[281]

Now Minamoto no Tsunemoto, the vice-governor of Musashi, Taira no Sadamori, the senior secretary of Hitachi, and Fujiwara no Hidesato, the provincial constable of Shimotsuke, had all performed meritorious deeds with considerable courage and each was rewarded in recognition of his services. A memorial issued back on the 9th day of the Third Month reported to the Central Affairs Ministry that the strategy against the rebels had been competently executed with loyalty and efficiency,[282] that Masakado's head had

[278] According to *Ichidai Yōki*, Okiyo was killed in Kazusa on Tengyō 3(940).2.19. DNS, I. 7, p. 677.

[279] Kimitsura (Kintsura) was the second son of Yoshikane—see p. 89, n. 79, above. He accompanied Tadanobu, the *fuku-shōgun*, on the eastern expedition, according to *Fusō Ryakki* for Tengyō 3(940).2.8. DNS, I. 7, p. 616. Kintsura's area of jurisdiction as provincial constable was probably limited to Shimōsa.

[280] The warrant is described on p. 133, above.

[281] 'Imperial envoy' probably refers to Fujiwara no Tadabun. The text of the official pardon does not survive.

[282] This is a tentative translation of what appears to be a faultily constructed or transcribed sentence. It reads, *Yotte inuru sangatsu kokonoka Nakatsukasa ni sō-shite ikusa no hakarigoto yoku chūsetsu o nobu* 仍去三月九日奏中務軍謀克宣忠節.

As set down in *Yōrōryō*, section 17, article 18, an official of the Central Affairs Ministry (*nakatsukasa-shō*) was required to go to the outskirts of the capital to greet and inspect the troops when they returned victorious from battle. The report issued to the Central Affairs Ministry on the 9th day of the Third Month

subsequently been brought to the military encampment, and that word of the martial achievements of the government forces had reached the court.[283]

With regard to Vice-Governor Tsunemoto, his report that a rebellion was being plotted in the east had at first been considered false, but now that events had substantiated his charges, he was promoted to the junior fifth rank, lower grade.[284] Secretary Sadamori had fought many battles over the years, yet had never won a decisive victory. But when Hidesato joined forces with him, together they were able to take the rebel's head. They were successful because they rigorously adhered to Hidesato's time-honored battle strategies; Hidesato was thus granted the junior fourth rank, lower grade. Sadamori had endured many years of peril and hardship, and it was through his persistent efforts that the evil gang had been eliminated. He was thus promoted to the senior fifth rank, upper grade.[285]

In view of these developments, it can be said that, although Masakado erred by harboring excessive ambitions and, as a result, was carried away on the river of death, his downfall brought official promotions to others. For his part, Masakado felt no resentment. How can this be? It is because he believed that, just as a tiger's skin lives on after it, so his own fame would live on too.[286] But the tragic irony of it was that he himself died and it was the others who received fame.

was presumably the findings of this official based upon his inspection. Kajihara (7), II, p. 325.

283 'Military encampment' most likely refers to the camp of the anti-insurgency forces commanded by Tadabun. Its location is not known. Masakado's head evidently arrived at the encampment some time before the report was sent to the Central Affairs Ministry, and it remained there until the 25th day of the Fourth Month, when it was dispatched to the capital.

284 According to *Fusō Ryakki*, Tsunemoto was promoted on Tengyō 3(940).3.9 along with Sadamori and Hidesato, but *Nihon Kiryaku* gives Tengyō 3.1.9 as the date of his promotion. DNS, I. 7, pp. 578–79 & 723. The latter date is believed to be correct.

285 See the preceding note for the date of the promotions of Sadamori and Hidesato. As a reward for his services, Hidesato received a grant of land to be held in perpetuity by his descendants. Sadamori seems to have been promoted to the junior fifth rank, upper grade, not senior fifth, upper grade, as *Shōmonki* states. On this occasion, he was also appointed assistant director of the Right Imperial Stables (*umaryō no suke*). DNS, I. 7, p. 723.

286 A Chinese source for this saying predating *Shōmonki* has not been found. *Wu-tai shih-chi* (1060), 32, p. 4, has the version, 'A leopard leaves behind its hide at death, a man leaves his name.'

If we consider the matter of the rebellion further, it may be observed that long ago, tragedy was visited upon seven states because of the rebelliousness of six kings.[287] In the present case, however, the eight eastern provinces were thrown into turmoil by the revolt of just one warrior. Inasmuch as ambitious plots of this nature have seldom been perpetrated in either past or recent history, it is not surprising that this uprising should be without precedent in Japan from the Age of the Gods to the present.

So it was that Masakado's wife and children roamed around with no place to go and suffered unforgettable humiliation, while his brothers lost their homes and had nowhere to hide. Masakado's soldiers, once as numerous as the clouds, dispersed undetected beyond the mists; other supporters who had followed him like shadows died in vain during their flight. Parents and children who had become separated in the disorder wandered over hills and streams in search of one another, while husbands and wives who had parted unwillingly in the turmoil now looked for each other within the province and beyond. Although they were not birds, parents experienced the sadness of the 'parting of the four fledglings';[288] although they were not trees, siblings felt the 'sadness of the three chaste-trees'.[289] The innocent and the guilty alike shared a common fate, just as fragrant and fetid plants intermingle on the paths between the paddies; the pure and the tainted alike were merged in suffering, just as the muddy waters of the Ching and the limpid waters of the Wei flow together.[290]

[287] Between 239 and 221 B.C. the forces of Ch'in defeated in rapid succession the armies of the six allied kings of Han, Chao, Wei, Ch'u, Yen, and Ch'i, thereby unifying China under the rule of the king of Ch'in. The apparent source for this line about 'six kings' and 'seven states' is *Ti fan*, 1, pp. 2b–3a: 'Six kings harbored the desire to rebel and [thus] seven states suffered the ravages of war.'

[288] 'The parting of the four fledglings' is an allusion to a story found in *K'ung-tzu chia-yü*, 5, p. 5ab. It serves as a figure of speech for parents' sorrowful parting with their children.

[289] The *ching* (J. *ninjinboku*), or chaste-tree, is *Vitex cannabifolia*, a small deciduous tree native to China. 'The sadness of the three chaste-trees' is synonymous with the sorrowful parting of siblings and alludes to an anecdote about three selfish brothers who once contemplated dividing their deceased father's estate, which included a chaste-tree, into three parts. According to *Dai Kan-wa jiten*, IX, p. 641. 1, #59, this story is found in *Ch'i hsieh-chi*, a work by Tung-yang Wu-i of the Southern Sung, but a search through this text has not uncovered the anecdote.

[290] The Ching River rises in Kansu province and joins the Wei River, a tributary of the Yellow River, in Shensi province.

Nowadays, thunder may be heard over an area of one hundred *li*, but Masakado's infamy is already known as far away as a thousand *li*. Given over to the practices of T'ai-k'ang, Masakado in the end lost the Way of King Hsüan.[291] [According to *Shang shu*, T'ai-k'ang was an unprincipled man who was fond of hunting and died in Tung-tu.[292] According to *Chü-kung*, King Hsüan revered ancient ways.[293] This is why these men are mentioned here.] He plotted evil single-mindedly and competed in the Nine-Fold Court for the imperial throne. His excessive crimes caused him to forfeit his good reputation within his own lifetime, and the retribution for his unbridled waywardness was dishonor that lingered long after his death.[294]

It is commonly said that Masakado resided in the Toyota district of Shimōsa province on the Tōkaidō Circuit owing to karma from a former existence. He was busily occupied solely with taking human life and never once thought of doing a single good deed. But a lifetime has its limit, and Masakado too finally met his end. Where did he go? Where was he reborn? And in whose dwelling does he now live?

A man from the provinces reported the following:

'Masakado now lives in the village of the Eight Impediments in the Township of the Five Destinies in the District of the Six Paths in the Land of the Three Realms.[295] A messenger from the Realm

[291] T'ai-k'ang, r. 2188–2159 B.C., was the third ruler of the Hsia dynasty—see n. 292, below. Hsüan Wang, r. 827–781 B.C., was the eleventh ruler of the Chou dynasty. His long reign was particularly distinguished; he sent expeditions to expel invading barbarian tribes, revived earlier practices that had fallen into disuse, and restored the fortunes of the Chou dynasty.

[292] For *Shang shu*'s account of the inglorious reign of T'ai-k'ang, which was characterized by idleness and dissipation, see Legge (4), pp. 156–57. It is believed that T'ai-k'ang died at Yang-hsia, not Tung-tu ('The Eastern Capital', Loyang at the time *Shōmonki* was written).

[293] *Shakō ni iwaku sen-ō to iu wa furuki o itadaku* 車攻曰宣王古戴. These words, with inversion and verbal substitution, are from the first line of the introduction to the ode *Chü-kung*, in *Shih ching* (*Mao Shih*) 10, pp. 9a–10a: '[With regard to] the *Chü-kung* ode: King Hsüan revived ancient practices.'

[294] Stramigioli (2), p. 71, conjectures that the non-extant original text of *Shōmonki* ended with this sentence, although convincing proof is lacking.

[295] This almost comical 'address of residence' combines Buddhist cosmological terminology with Japanese political administrative divisions. *Hachinan*, 'eight impediments', include various unfavorable circumstances of birth that prevent man from seeing a Buddha or hearing the dharma—birth in one of the evil paths of reincarnation (see n. 297, below), in remote regions, in the state of being deaf, blind, and mute, etc. *Mochizuki Bukkyō Daijiten* v, pp. 4221.3–4222.2. *Goshu*, 'five destinies', refers to the five paths of rebirth accessible to the unenlightened

of Intermediate Existence[296] was sent to this world to report on Masakado's fate and related Masakado's words as follows:

> While I was on earth, I accomplished nothing good, and as retribution for this karma, I have fallen into one of the evil paths of reincarnation.[297] At this very time, fifteen thousand people are making complaints against me. Oh, the misery of it! When I was engaged in doing evil, I urged my supporters to commit crimes with me, but on the day of retribution, I incurred a number of punishments and have had to bear the suffering alone.
>
> My body was placed in the forest of sword-leaf trees where I was made to suffer, and my liver was roasted over smoldering embers in an iron cage.[298] It is impossible to describe the extremity of my suffering.[299] However, once every month I get a brief respite from this suffering. The reason why I am allowed this rest was explained to me by a lictor, who said, 'This is owing to the saving power of the part of the Golden Light Sutra upon which you placed a vow while you were still alive on earth.'[300]

among men: the heavenly world, the world of man, beasts, hungry devils, and hell. *Mochizuki Bukkyō Daijiten*, II, p. 1206.2–3. For the terms 'three realms' and 'six paths', see p. 76, n. 19, and p. 109, n. 162, above, respectively.

296 *Chūu no tsukai*. In the later schools of Buddhist thought, *chūu* (Skt. *antarā-bhava*) is seen as an intermediate stage of existence between death in one life and rebirth in the next, where a being dwells temporarily for as few as seven or as many as forty-nine days. *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, I. 4, pp. 730–33.

297 *Akushu*, 'the evil paths of reincarnation', usually denotes the three lowest levels of the six paths: beasts, hungry ghosts, and the hells. Sometimes higher paths are included among the *akushu*. *Mochizuki Bukkyō Daijiten*, I, pp. 17.2–17.3.

298 *Kenrin*, 'sword-leaf forest', is a reference to Skt. *asipattra*, the hell of sword-leaf trees, which is one of sixteen lesser hells subordinate to the eight hot hells in Buddhist thought. The location of *asipattra* with respect to the eight hot hells varies according to the scripture consulted. The author of *Shōmonki* appears to have associated *kenrin* with *mugen jigoku* (Skt. *avīci*), 'the hell of endless suffering', the most dreadful of the eight hot hells, where sinners are roasted over embers.

299 This passage, beginning with 'A messenger . . . was sent to this world' and continuing down to this footnote key, is partially based upon an elegy for the late Minister of the Left Minamoto no Tōru, 822–895, written in 926 by Retired Emperor Uda, r. 887–897. Murakami, pp. 65–66. For the text of this passage, see *Honchō Monzui*, XIV, p. 353 11. 9–11, in *Kokushi Taikei*, XXIX, pt. 2.

300 *Konkōmyō Saishōōkyō*, 'The Sutra of the Sovereign Kings of the Golden Light', often abbreviated to *Konkōkyō*, 'Golden Light Sutra', is a Mahāyāna sutra that was highly influential in Heian-period Japan. Japanese Buddhists believed that sutra-copying was a means of accumulating karmic merit and thereby cur-

By the calendar of the underworld officialdom, twelve years are counted as one year, twelve months as one month, and thirty days as one day.[301] By this method of calculating, the time between respites would be ninety-two years by the Japanese calendar.[302] I should be able to escape from my suffering after that length of time owing to the vow I have made.

My brothers living on earth, my wife and children of the temporal world, show compassion toward your fellow man and accumulate good deeds to compensate for past evil! No matter how good something may taste, you must refrain from eating the flesh of living things, and although you may begrudge it, give alms to the priesthood often.[303]

The message from Masakado's spirit is as stated above.'

Recorded during the Sixth Month, Tengyō 3.[304]

One text has the following:[305]

ing illness, achieving rebirth in the Pure Land, or gaining salvation from suffering in one of the hells. A non-extant text of *Shōmonki*, quoted in *Hōbutsu-shū*, ca. 1182–1189, under the title *Masakado no Kassenjō*, states specifically that Masakado made a vow to copy the sutra, believing that this would help to bring about victory in battle. Kajihara (7), II, p. 348.

[301] This calculation does not work out properly. If twelve earth years count as one year in hell, and if one earth year counts as a month, then one earth month would be equivalent to two and a half days in hell, not one day, following the 12:1 ratio of earth time to hell time.

[302] Ninety-two years by the Japanese calendar would correspond to seven and a half years in hell, using the 12:1 ratio given above. These figures do not seem to fit the scheme of 'monthly respites' mentioned above in the translation.

[303] Taking the life of a living being, whether animal or human, is regarded as one of the cardinal sins in traditional Buddhist thought.

[304] This date probably signifies the time when the original text of *Shōmonki* was written, rather than the date when the preceding message from Masakado's spirit was recorded. See Chapter 2, pp. 40–43, above.

[305] It is not known which text of *Shōmonki* is being quoted here, and there is uncertainty as to where the quotation really ends, because the scribe neglected to mark the end of the quotation with the customary 者, as was usual in Japanese *kambun*. I favor the view of Nagazumi (5), pp. 42–44, who maintains that the quotation is appended to the end of the *Shōmonki* narrative, which is marked by the date notation, and that it runs down to the end of the document, where the colophon giving the two Shōtoku dates is found.

Kajihara argues, on the other hand, that the quotation from the variant ver-

By the Japanese calendar, in ninety-three years I will have one brief respite from my suffering. My brothers, you must fulfill my vow in order that I may escape from this suffering.[306]

With regard to the above, it is said that the intrepidity shown by Masakado during his lifetime did not bring him honor after his death and the retribution for his high-handedness was intense suffering after death. Masakado had lifelong foes, and he fought them tooth and nail. But in the end the strong were victorious and the weak were defeated. There was a rebellion in the land, and Masakado contended with the emperor like the moon in rivalry with the sun. But government strength rallied and rebel power declined.

One of the principles of human society is that since people dread death they should never go to war. If a person incurs shame in this life, there can be no honor after death. But strife prevails on earth and evil is rampant.[307] Among different people and different minds you find the desire to fight and the desire to avoid conflict.[308] Should some informed person in the future have reason to suspect that a crisis is about to occur, he should make his views known by putting them in writing.[309]

The above has been respectfully submitted by a man from the provinces who shall go unnamed.

Writing completed in Daichibō at the hour of the Bird, 29th day, First Month, Shōtoku 3.[310]

Reading of the text completed at the hour of the Sheep, 10th day, Second Month, Shōtoku 3.[311]

sion is only two sentences in length, terminating where footnote key 306 is found; following the quotation, the *Shimpukuji-bon* narrative resumes and continues down to the colophon. Kajihara (9), pp. 34–36.

The problem of the variant text is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, pp. 40–42, above.

306 These two lines constitute an alternative version of the two-sentence passage in the message from Masakado's spirit which begins: 'By this method of calculating, the time between respites. . . . ' The significance of the number ninety-three in the variant text is no clearer than that of the number ninety-two in the other version cited above.

307 This sentiment reveals the influence of the *mappō* doctrine—see p. 109, n. 165, above.

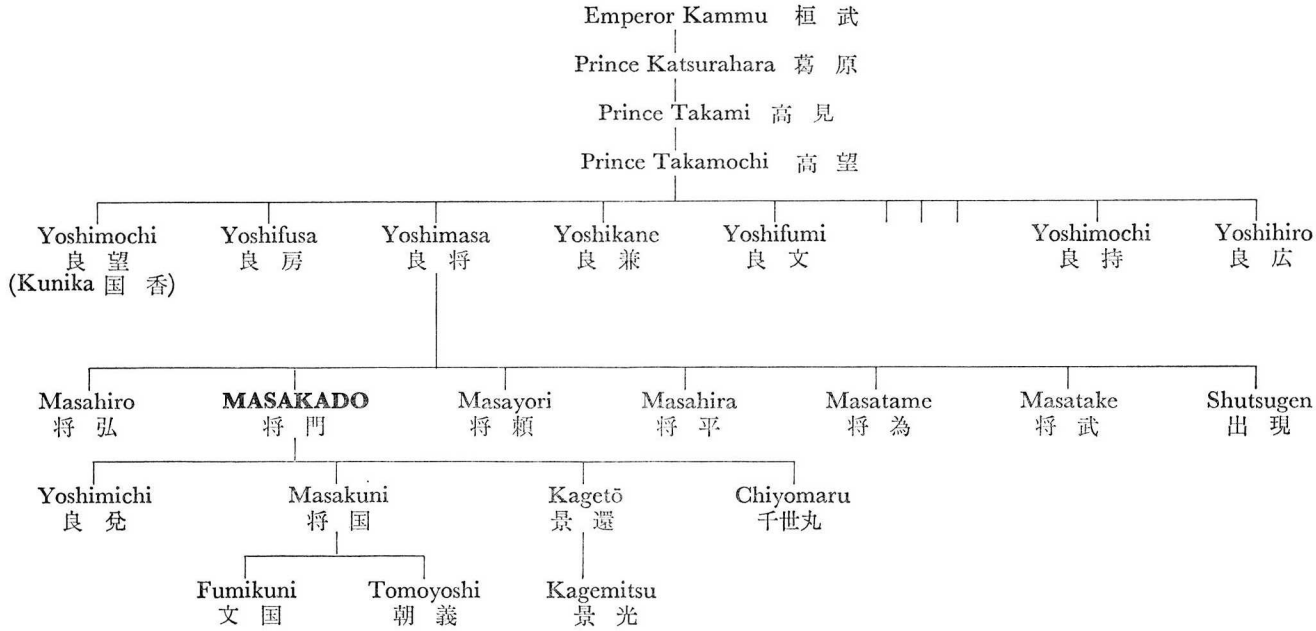
[308] This is a tentative translation of a troublesome sentence that may be read as follows: *Hitobito kokoro-gokoro tatakau mo ari tatakawazaru mo ari* 人々心々有戦不戦. The following alternative reading is also possible, although less appropriate in the context: *Hitobito kokoro-gokoro tatakai aru mo tatakawazu:* 'People have an aggressive nature but refrain from taking up arms.'

[309] This sentence reads as follows: *Moshi hijō no utagai araba nochinochi no tassha shibaraku shirusan nomi* 若有非常之疑後々達者且記而已矣. *Hijō no utagai* might alternatively be taken to mean 'grave reservations' instead of 'suspicions that a crisis [is about to occur]', in which case the following translation would be possible: 'Should some informed person in the future have grave reservations [about what I have written above], he should put his doubts in writing.'

This latter interpretation brings to mind the closing line in *Mutsuwaki*, an eleventh-century war tale, which reads, ' . . . I am sensible of having made a great many blunders which anyone acquainted with the truth is at liberty to correct.' McCullough (2), p. 204.

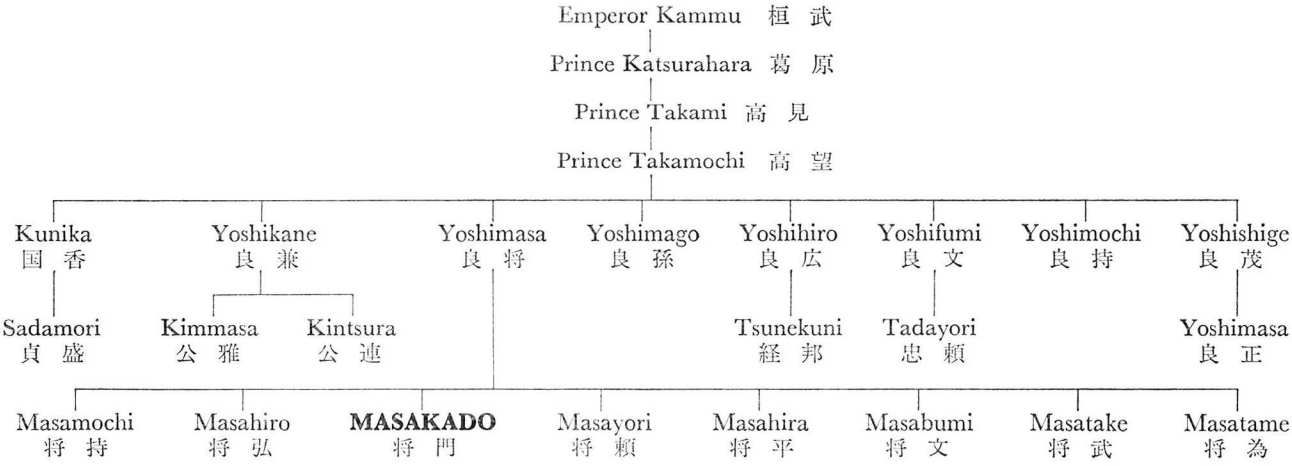
[310] Daichibō is probably the name of a temple, but has not been identified for certain. There is a Daichibō, 'a place in the eastern valley of Mt Hiei', appearing in *Konjaku Monogatari-shū*, 19, NKBT, XXV, p. 132, but it is uncertain whether this refers to the Daichibō in question. The hour of the Bird is the two-hour period between five and seven in the evening.

[311] The hour of the Sheep is the two-hour period between one and three in the afternoon.



Genealogy of the Sōma Family

Based on *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū*, 6 *shū*, pt. 1, pp. 222–24.



Genealogy of the Kammu Heike Family

Based on *Sompi Bummyaku*, in *Shintei Zōho Kokushi Taikei*, 60, pt. 2, pp. 1-16.

Chronology

Enchō 9 (931)

Masakado has a dispute with his uncle Taira no Yoshikane over a woman.

Jōhei 5 (935)

2.2(?) Masakado defeats the sons of Minamoto no Mamoru and others at Nomoto.

10.21 Taira no Yoshimasa, Masakado's uncle, forces Masakado to fight him at Kawawa but is soundly defeated.

Jōhei 6 (936)

6.27 Yoshikane, Yoshimasa, and Sadamori (Masakado's cousin) fight Masakado near the Shimotsuke provincial offices. Masakado routs the enemy.

10.17 Masakado departs for the capital, where he defends himself against a suit filed by Mamoru. Masakado receives 'special favor' and only a light penalty is imposed.

Jōhei 7 (937)

1.7 A general amnesty is granted and Masakado is pardoned.

5.11 Masakado leaves the capital for home.

8.6 Yoshikane defeats Masakado at Kogai Ford.

8.17 Yoshikane defeats Masakado at Horikoshi Ford.

10.9 Masakado burns down Yoshikane's residence in Hitachi and on 10.13 tries unsuccessfully to engage him in battle on Mt Tsukuba.

11.5 Council of State issues an edict calling for the arrest of Yoshikane, Mamoru, and four others.

12.4 Yoshikane's men launch a night attack on Masakado's residence, but Masakado repulses them.

Jōhei 8 (938)

2 Provisional Governor Okiyo and Vice-Governor Minamoto no Tsunemoto, both of Musashi, clash with District Magistrate Musashi no Takeshiba. Later this year, or early in the following, Masakado tries to mediate.

2.29 Masakado engages Sadamori in battle in Shinano, but Sadamori escapes to the capital, where he denounces Masakado.

Tengyō 1 (938)

6 Sadamori leaves the capital for the east with an edict ordering that Masakado be brought before the authorities for questioning.

Tengyō 2 (939)

3.3 Tsunemoto makes a secret report to the court accusing Masakado of plotting with Okiyo and Takeshiba to rebel against the state.

5.2 Masakado secures documents attesting to his innocence.

6 Yoshikane dies.

10 Masakado tries unsuccessfully to capture Sadamori near the Shimotsuke provincial offices.

11.21 Masakado goes into Hitachi with his army to ask that charges against his ally, Fujiwara no Haruaki, be dropped and ends up taking over the province.

12 At Okiyo's instigation, Masakado decides to conquer eight provinces in the east.

12.11 Masakado takes over Shimotsuke.

12.15 Masakado takes over Kōzuke and writes to Regent Tadahira.

12.19 Masakado holds an appointment ceremony to fill posts in his realm. An oracle from the god Hachiman declares Masakado the emperor and he takes the title New Emperor. Masakado annexes five more provinces in the east with little resistance.

Tengyō 3 (940)

1.11 Edict calling for Masakado's arrest is issued.

2.1 Masakado is defeated by Provincial Constable Fujiwara no Hidesato and Sadamori at Kawaguchi.

2.14 Masakado is killed in battle at Kitayama.

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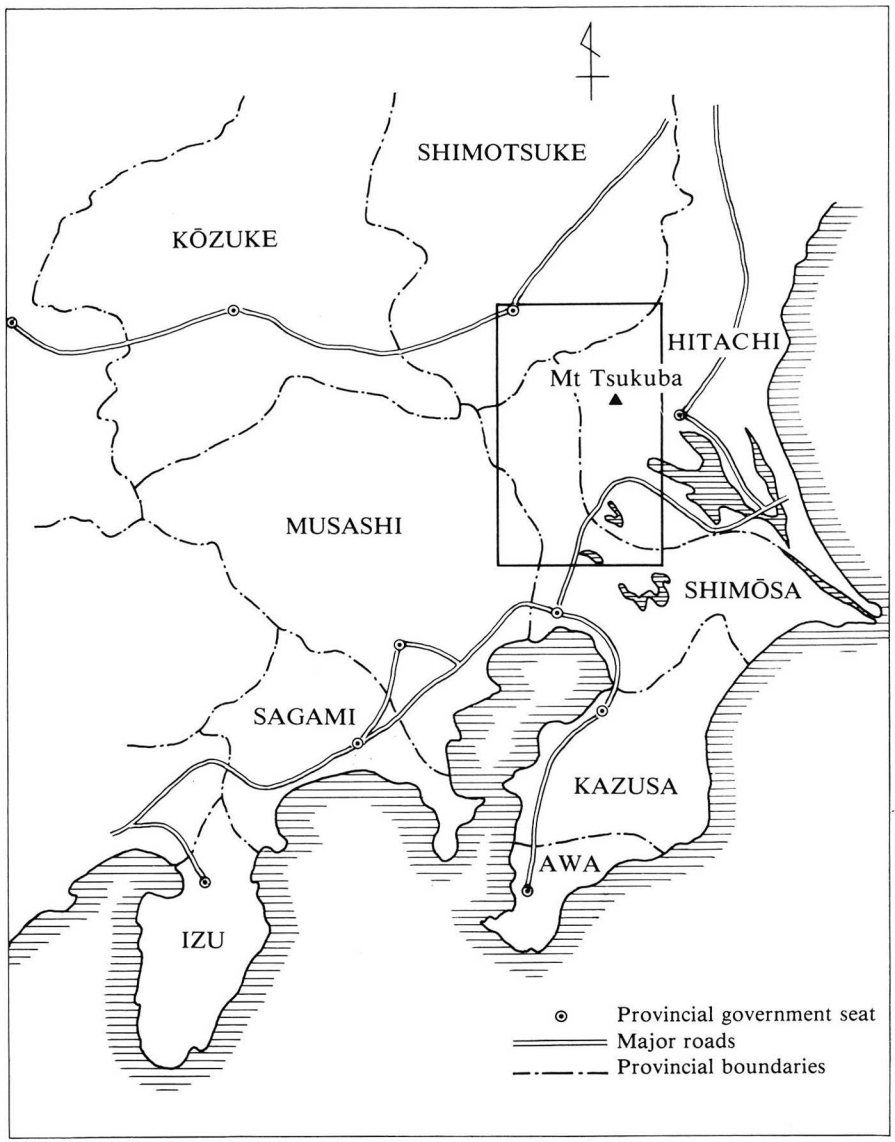
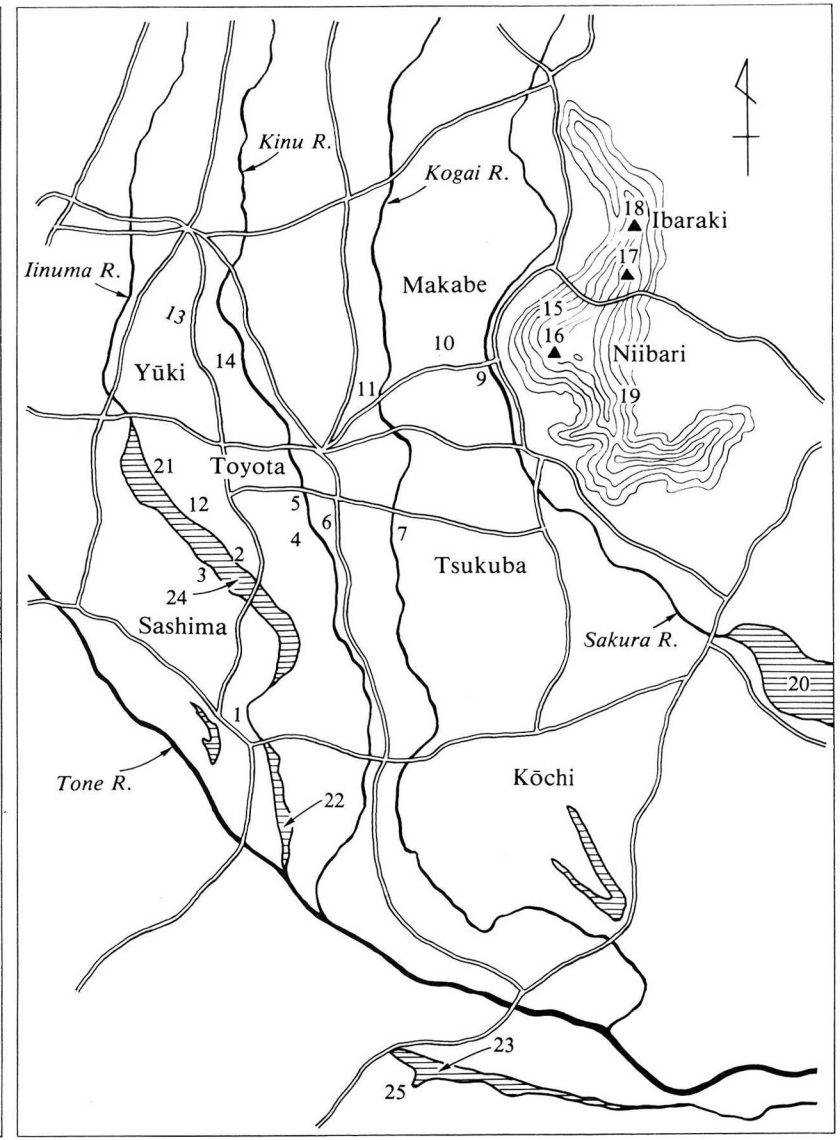


The Bandō Provinces



Enlargement of enclosed area in the map of the Bandō Provinces

1 Iwai
2 Okazaki
3 Ashizu Inlet
4 Ikuwa Pastures
5 Horikoshi Ford
6 Kamawa
7 Kogai Ford
8 Mimori
9 Shida
10 Nomoto
11 Ōgushi
12 Kawaguchi
13 Hōjōji
14 Kawawa
15 Hatori
16 Mt Tsukuba
17 Mt Ashio
18 Mt Kaba
19 Yubukuro Pass
20 Kasumigaura
21 Musuhe
22 Sugaonuma
23 Teganuma
24 Iinuma
25 Ōi